









The Path Which Led a Protestant Lawyer to the Catholic Church

BY
PETER H. BURNETT

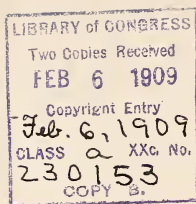
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"Thou hast made us, O Lord, for Thyself, and our hearts are
restless until they repose in Thee."—*Saint Augustine.*

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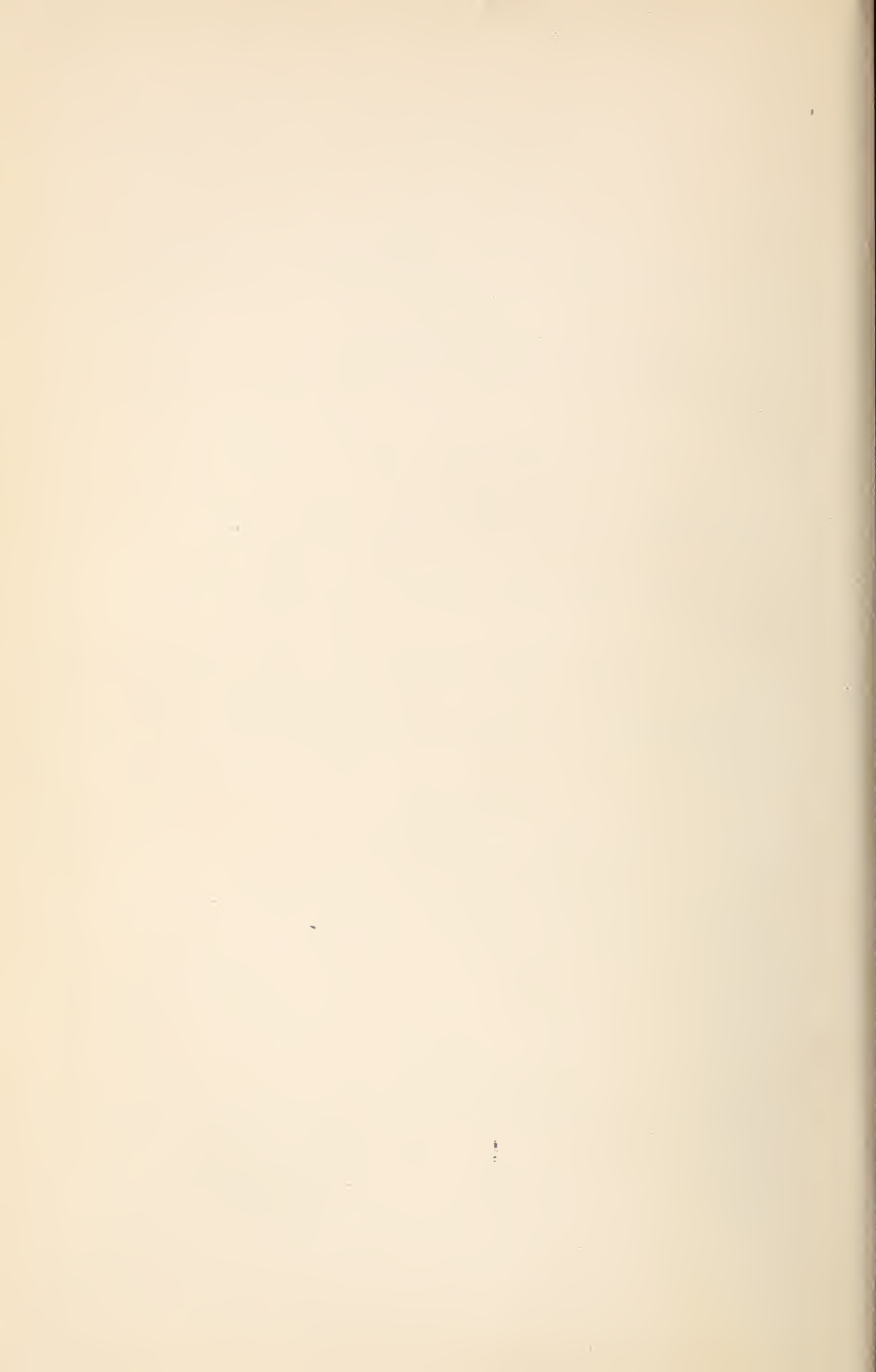
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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

Judge Burnett's "Path Which Led a Protestant Lawyer to The Catholic Church," was published fifty years ago.

If an excuse for its reappearance now were needed, it will be found in the following extracts from Dr. Brownson's review of the work in 1860;—

"The Appletons have, since the beginning of the year, published the anxiously looked for work of Governor Burnett, of California, giving his full reasons for becoming a Catholic. It is the work not of a priest, nor of a professional theologian, but of a clear-headed, strong-minded lawyer, who has not suffered the law to make him forget he has a soul, or to stifle his conscience. It is written in a clear, forcible and unpretending style, in a straightforward earnest manner, and is to be judged not as mere literary performance, but as the grave utterance of a man who really has something to say, and is pressed by an internal necessity to say it.

What strikes the reader at a glance in this remarkable volume, is its perfect honesty and sincerity. As you read it you feel that the eminent jurist is honestly retracing the path and detailing the successive steps, by which he actually came into the Church; and it has a very high psychological value aside from its positive and conclusive arguments for the objective truth of Catholicity or the divine foundation and constitution of the Catholic Church. The whole tone and character of the work inspire confidence in the author, as a fair-minded man,

as a candid judge, and as one who would be as incapable of knowingly deceiving others as of deceiving himself. He has evidently inquired earnestly and honestly for the truth for his own mind, and he gives the results of his inquiries for precisely for what he found them worth to himself. It is always of great interest to see what has convinced a conscientious mind, intent on saving its own soul, endowed with more than ordinary ability, highly cultivated, strengthened by varied experience, and accustomed to sift and weigh evidence as a lawyer in the most difficult and intricate cases.

The argument of the book is presented under the legal form, by the judge who sums up the case and gives his decision, rather than as presented by the advocate. It is an argument addressed to reason and good sense, not to passion and sensibility; and we cannot conceive it possible for any fair-minded man to read it and not be convinced, although we can conceive that many a man may read it and not acknowledge himself convinced. The difficulty is that the mass of non-Catholics, unless already touched by the grace of God, have a mortal repugnance to finding the Catholic Church proved; and the more legitimate and conclusive the argument addressed to them, the less legitimate and conclusive will they find it. They are not accustomed to find or to expect certainty in matters of religion, and they feel it a sort of insult to their understandings when you present them a religion which demands and seems to have certainty. The author has a truly legal mind, and he brings every question to the law and testimony, and insists on a verdict accordingly, whereas the mass of our non-Catholics recognize no law or testimony in the case, and suppose all depends on one's own fancy or caprice.

The author assumes what is true, that religion if re-

ligion, is the *lex suprema* for the reason and will; and the question in his mind was never whether religion is to be obeyed or not, but whether there be a revealed religion and if there be what and where it is. What and where is the court to apply it. His book is the answer.

If we could convert the age to reason, we could easily convert it to Catholicity. All the great principles on which faith rests are principles of reason, principles of natural religion, included in the law of nature. In believing Catholicity, the man who really believes what is called natural religion, the truths of reason, that is the truths reason is competent to prove with certainty, has no principles to change, no principles to reject or to adopt. What he has to accept in addition to what he already holds is not in the order of principles, but in the order of facts, provable in like manner as any other facts. The incarnation is a fact, redemption through the cross is a fact and the church is a fact, judgment is a fact. The supernatural order is a fact, but a fact which supposes the natural, and which is created in accordance with the principles of natural reason, only lying in a sphere above reason.

Into this question Judge Burnett has not entered. He takes for granted the authority of reason, supposes his readers acknowledge reason and conform to its principles, and confines himself to proving to reason the supernatural facts asserted by the church. This he does conclusively, and in doing it does all that is necessary to be done for those who really understand and accept the authority of reason. We know no author, writing a popular work who has done it better; we are not certain but we might say, who has done it so well, so conclusively.

In writing his book, Judge Burnett has rendered a noble homage to his new faith; he has, too, performed a

patriotic act which will compare favorably with the most glorious deeds of our greatest patriots. Through him California has made a more glorious contribution to the Union than all the gold of her mines, for the truth is more precious than gold, yea than fine gold."—*Brownson's Quarterly Review*, April, 1860.

The book as it now meets the reader, has been reduced to about one-half its original size. This task was rendered easy by the omission of the lengthy and frequent quotations, subsidiary arguments and repetitions, that the eminent jurist, unjustly to himself, evidently considered necessary to a clearer understanding of explanations and lines of reasoning, that were sufficiently plain in the first instance.

It is hoped that this abridgment has been accomplished without seriously disturbing the continuity of his treatment or of weakening the force of his arguments.

The rest has been left almost as it came from the pen of the author. The theologian will discover an occasional technical inaccuracy, which the evident good faith of the distinguished convert together with his unqualified professions of submission to the judgment of the Church, will prevent even the most critical from interpreting in other than a perfectly orthodox sense.

The editor takes great pleasure in acknowledging his gratitude to Judge Burnett for the invaluable aid his book has been to him in his dealings with many sincere and intelligent non-Catholics, in their attempts to find the true church and hopes that it may be the means of assisting others to find the "One fold and the One Shepherd."

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Saint Louis, Mo.

Feast of All Saints, November 1st, 1908.

PREFACE

I was once a Protestant, and I became a Catholic. The main reasons which led to this change will be found substantially stated in the following work. My quotations of Scripture are generally from King James's translation, mainly for the reason that this was the one used by me in my pursuit of the true Church.

My parents were Baptists; but until the age of thirty-two, I was not a believer in the truth of Christianity. My own observations of men and things, as well as the arguments of others, at length satisfied me that the system was divine; and I at once acted upon my convictions, and joined myself to the Disciples, in 1840. In 1843 I removed with my family to Oregon. After my arrival and while I was temporarily located at Fort Vancouver, I attended High Mass as a mere spectator, on Christmas, at midnight. I had never witnessed anything like it before, and the profound solemnity of the services—the intense, yet calm fervor of the worshippers—the great and marked differences between the two forms of worship—and the instantaneous reflection, that this was the Church claiming to be the only true Church, did make the deepest impression upon my mind for the moment. In all my religious experience, I had never felt an impulse so profound, so touching. I had witnessed very exciting scenes in Protestant worship, and had myself often participated, and was happy. But I had never felt any impulse so powerful—an impulse that thrilled my inmost soul. I gazed into the faces of the worshippers,

and they appeared as if they were actually looking at the Lord Jesus, and were hushed into perfect stillness, in His awful presence.

As I knew nothing of the reasons upon which the Catholic theory assumes to rest, I soon thought I saw errors that I could not sanction. And then there came a painful revulsion in my feelings, as if the flowers of Paradise had been almost within my reach, and had been suddenly withdrawn from sight, and I had found it to be but an illusion and a mistake. But still I can never forget the holy impulses of my soul at that deep moment.

My knowledge of the Catholic theory was exceedingly general and indefinite. I had never read a work in its favor, and had never heard but two Catholic sermons, and they were not upon controversial points. I knew that the Old Church made what are called arrogant and intolerant pretensions; but in all my reading, in all my intercourse with men generally, and among my own kin, I had scarcely ever met with anything in her favor. From my limited opportunities, I had only learned that

“To love her was shame, to revile her was glory.”

In the fall of 1844, a Baptist preacher settled in my immediate neighborhood, who had the published Debate between Campbell and Purcell; and as the Catholic question was often mentioned, and as I knew so little about it, I borrowed and read the book. I had the utmost confidence in the capacity of Mr. Campbell as an able debater. But while the attentive reading of the Debate did not convince me of the entire truth of the Catholic theory, I was greatly astonished to find that so much could be said in its support. On many points, and those of great importance, it was clear to my mind, that Mr. Campbell had been overthrown. Still, there were many objections to

the Catholic Church, either not noticed by the Bishop, or not satisfactorily answered; and I arose from the reading of that discussion still a Protestant.

My thoughts continually recurred to the main positions and arguments on both sides, and the more I reflected upon the fundamental positions of the Bishop, the more force and power I found them to possess. My own reflections often afforded me answers to difficulties that, at first, seemed insurmountable, until the question arose in my mind, whether Mr. Campbell had done full justice to his side of the question. Many of his positions seemed so extreme and ill-founded, that I could not sanction them. All the prejudices I had, if any, were in his favor. I knew that it was worse than idle to indulge prejudices when investigating any subject whatever. I was determined to be true to myself! and this could only be in finding the exact truth, and following it, when known.

My mind was, therefore, left in a state of restless uncertainty; and I determined to examine the questions between Catholics and Protestants thoroughly, so far as my limited opportunities and poor abilities would permit. In the prosecution of this design, I procured all the works, on both sides, within my reach, and examined them alternately, side by side. This investigation occupied all my spare time for about eighteen months. I observed substantially the course of investigation pointed out in the introduction, and followed the rules of construction therein given. Besides this, I prayed humbly and sincerely, that I might first know the truth, and then have the grace to follow it wherever it might lead me. I examined carefully, prayerfully, and earnestly, until I was satisfied, beyond a doubt, that the Old Church was the true, and the only true Church.

“And I said, if there’s peace to be found in the world,
The heart that was humble might hope for it here.”

And in this I was not mistaken. I found her, as holy
Cyprian of old had said, “The house of unity and peace.”
I mean to live and die in her communion.

INTRODUCTION.

It is a fact well known to every jurist and lawyer, that almost every new, and at first perplexing case arising in our courts of justice, (and which are not governed by statutory law,) is decided at last by the legitimate extension and application of well-known and familiar principles. The difficulty exists in the extension and application of the principle to new predicaments of fact; and the judge who possesses discrimination and impartiality in the highest degree, is most certain to arrive at the correct conclusion. The power to discriminate between a just and a false application of a principle belongs to the highest order of mind.

All the parts of every system of truth must be perfectly consistent with each other. All the facts, and series of facts that have existed at any time from the beginning of the world to the present age, were consistent and harmonious in every particular. The existence of one does not displace that of another. They no more conflict with each other, than do the stars of heaven. Each occupies its place in the vast chain of events. And all the parts of a true system, as well as all facts, are not only thoroughly consistent one with another, but they all bear a certain relation to each other, more or less intimate. As all the events that ever did occur were connected with certain other events — with some as their causes, with others as their effects — so, all the truths of a true system are, in the same way, connected with each other. If, then, in the investigation of a certain system,

we can find its leading principle, by patient and honest application and extension of this principle, we shall be led, step by step, to the discovery of other principles, and finally be enabled to arrive at the whole truth.

The object of every fair writer or speaker is to place, in the minds of others, an exact copy of his own thoughts. In doing this, he selects words and phrases best adapted, in his opinion, to accomplish the end intended. If the writer or speaker understands the existing usages of the language he employs as a medium of thought, he selects those terms which will most accurately convey his true meaning to others. For this reason, the construction put upon the words of a writer or speaker by his contemporaries, is generally the correct one. There are exceptions to this general rule, for the meaning may be misapprehended; but these exceptions are special cases, to be judged by the special circumstances of each particular case.

The philosophic author of *Hermes*, as cited by Dr. Wiseman in his lectures upon the Real Presence, has expressed his views upon this subject in the following beautiful terms:

“For what is conversation between man and man? ’Tis a mutual intercourse of speaking and hearing. To the speaker, ’tis to teach; to the hearer, ’tis to learn. To the speaker, ’tis to descend from ideas to words; to the hearer, ’tis to ascend from words to ideas. If the hearer in this ascent can arrive at no ideas, then he is said not to understand; if he ascends to ideas dissimilar and heterogeneous from the speaker’s, then he is said to misunderstand. What then is requisite that he may be said to understand? That he should ascend to certain ideas treasured up within himself, correspondent and

similar to those within the speaker. The same may be said of a writer and reader."

1. *The construction should be upon the entire Scriptures, taken and construed together, so as to give free force and effect to all the passages.*

The rule at law for the construction of statutes and written instruments, is substantially the same, with one exception, which will be stated in its proper place.

"One part of a statute must be so construed by another, that the whole may (if possible) stand. (1 Blackstone's Com. 89.)

"It is an established rule in the exposition of statutes, that the intention of the lawgiver is to be deduced from a view of the whole, and of every part of a statute, taken and compared together." (1 Kent's Com. 461).

"The construction ought to be upon the entire deed, and not on any particular part of it. And such construction should be given, that, if possible, every part of the deed may be operative." (16 Johnson's N. Y. Reports, 172.)

The reasons for this sensible rule are very simple. It is presumed that the lawmaker intended something by each and every provision of the statute, and that he also intended to be consistent with himself. But as a mere human legislator may, and often does, contradict himself, the courts will only give force and effect to the different provisions so far as possible. Such a limitation will not apply to the divine law, which is consistent, and not contradictory.

There are many examples in the Scriptures which show the necessity and propriety of this rule. In one place we are substantially told that we are saved by keeping the commandments — in another, by grace — in an-

other, by the blood of Christ — in another, by baptism — in another, by faith. These different provisions are not at all in conflict with each other, and may, therefore, be so construed together as to give force and effect to all. The correct construction would be, that we are saved by the agency of all these requisites taken together.

The violation of this fundamental rule has, perhaps, led to more errors than any other. We have a notable instance in the temptation of our Lord by Satan, when he said:

“If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

This proposition was very acutely made, and the quotation to sustain it seemed very appropriate. But the poor devil had forgotten that another passage of Scripture must also be construed with it, and, consequently, his learning was completely put down by the reply of our Lord: “It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”

2. All the texts relating to the same subject must be considered as written by the same person, having a perfect knowledge of all that had been written before, the reader making a fair allowance for the difference in the style of each writer, and the different character of the existing circumstances.

The rule of law which requires all statutes relating to the same subject, though passed at different times, to be taken and construed together, is substantially similar to the above rule. The rule at law is based upon the presumption that the lawgiver was competent, and therefore acquainted with the state of the law as it existed at the

passage of the act, and had the previous laws in his mind when framing the statute.

The framers of statutes may be, and are sometimes ignorant of the existing state of the law; and this fact may possibly render the rule subject to exceptions in special cases. But the rule I have laid down in reference to the proper construction of Scripture is not subject to such exceptions. The whole having been dictated by the same infallible Spirit, must be held equally entitled to our confidence.

The *prima facie* presumption of competency in a human, becomes conclusive when applied to a Divine Law-giver.

3. *Words of unlimited meaning are yet to be restricted by the general scope and intent of the system.*

Among the examples to be found in the Scriptures, coming within this rule, it will be sufficient to mention the one found in the sixteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, where our Lord tells His Disciples that, "when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will teach you all truth." The phrase all truth is exceedingly broad, yet it must be restrained by the general scope and intent of the system Christ came to establish. It was no part of His system to teach mere truths of science. The latter class of truths cannot be embraced in the phrase "all truth."

The rule is founded in the principles of sound interpretation. At law it is substantially the same. A statute may contain very broad and sweeping terms, and yet they are restrained to the scope and intent of the act. So the provisions of the seventh amended article of the Constitution of the United States, which, in general terms, secures the right of trial by jury, in all cases where

the matter in controversy exceeds the sum of twenty dollars, is confined to trials in the Federal tribunals, and does not prevent the States from restricting the right of trial by jury to controversies involving a larger sum than twenty dollars.

4. *When a general principle is laid down in general terms, and without exceptions stated at the time, or in any other portions of the Scriptures, it must be taken in its widest sense compatible with the general scope and intent of the system.*

It is the practice of all lawgivers to state general principles embracing a whole class of cases, in general terms, and then to state the exceptions to the general principle specially. The form or manner of the statement of these exceptions is not at all material. They are often stated expressly as exceptions, and defined to be such; but they are often stated simply as special provisions in reference to special cases, without any express statement that they are express exceptions. In either case they limit the meaning of the general clause. There are some principles embracing all cases, and without exception; while there are other principles that embrace only a great majority of cases, and are, therefore, subject to some exceptions. In regard to the latter class of principles, it is matter of convenience first to state the general principle in general terms, and then afterwards to state the exceptions specially. We will suppose that the general principle would embrace ninety-eight out of each hundred cases. It would then be very difficult to state each of the ninety-eight cases separately, while it would be very easy to state the two cases as exceptions.

5. *When such exceptions to the general rule are stated in any part of the Scriptures, they are to be taken out of the operation of the general principle as exceptions, leav-*

ing the general principle to govern all other cases coming fairly within its import.

This rule is properly but a branch of the fourth rule, but will be found useful in practice. Both these rules are substantially the same as those applied in similar cases at law. There are often general statutes passed, embracing a great many cases, and yet liable to exceptions. These exceptions are often stated in the body of the act as exceptions — they are often stated in the same act, but not in the form of exceptions, but as provisions for particular cases, and they are often found in separate acts relating to special cases, which would otherwise come within the general principle. These special acts, as a general thing, have no express reference to the general act, but their provisions in their very nature are special, and must be taken out of the general principle, because they conflict with it. To state a case in point: There was a general act passed by the legislature regulating the Practice at Law. In this act there was a general provision requiring all process to be served upon the defendant by reading the same to him. There were many different forms of action, and in reference to one form of action, "Petition in Debt," there was a special act, and a clause in this act requiring the process to be served by delivering a copy of the writ to the defendant. There was no express reference in this special act to the general Practice Act, and yet there was no doubt as to the correct construction. In "Petition in Debt" the process had to be served by copy, and in all the other cases by reading.

Among similar examples in Scripture, it will be sufficient to mention one or two as illustrative of these two rules. It is said that we are saved through the merits of Christ. This is a general principle without any

exception. Again, it is said that "All things are possible with God," but St. Paul says that "God cannot lie." This is a case of exception to the general rule. "Ask, and you shall receive," "You do not receive because you ask amiss."

6. *The natural, simple, and literal construction is to be preferred, unless there be something, either in express words or in the context, to show a figurative meaning.*

The rule at law is substantially the same.

"The words of a statute," says the learned Commentator on American Law, "are to be taken in their natural and ordinary signification and import; and if technical words are used, they are to be taken in a technical sense. (1 Kent, 463.)

The rule I have laid down is evidently founded upon the grounds of reason and experience. That construction which is most obvious, simple and natural, is generally the most correct in reference to any writer; and before this rule should be departed from, there should exist good reasons for such a departure. As every writer and speaker is supposed, in simple justice to himself, his subject, and his readers or hearers, to select the most natural and simple terms, so the general rule must be in accordance with that presumption.

CHAPTER I

THE LAW OF CHRIST

*The law of Christ must form a rule of moral conduct,
and a standard of faith.*

The learned commentator on the laws of England defines municipal law to be, "A rule of civil conduct, prescribed by the supreme power in a State, commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong."

When he says, "Commanding what is right, and prohibiting what is wrong," he means, as judged by the theory of municipal law, of which he was speaking. As judged by the theory of civil government, and not by the law of God, or of abstract justice, the civil law always commands what is right, and prohibits what is wrong.

As the civil law may be unjust, when judged by the principles of morality, the law-making power in political government could not rightfully require us to believe its enactments just. And as no power in such a government can know the thoughts and intents of the mind, unless manifested by outward signs, the civil law could only place crime in action. No mere intention however wicked, can constitute a crime under this theory. The intention is only one of the ingredients of crime. And as the civil law leaves belief and intention untouched, it could never form a moral code. It lacks the wisdom, power, and justice required; and must, therefore, be exceedingly imperfect in these respects. All that the

law of the land can rightfully require us to do, is to comply with its provisions by our acts.

But the infirmities necessarily incident to human legislation are not found in the law of God. That sublime code can rightfully require us to believe all its provisions to be just, because they are so, in point of fact; and we are only required to believe that which we may know to be unerringly true. And for the very reason that a fallible lawgiver could not rightfully assume to govern faith and intention, an infallible lawgiver should regulate both; otherwise, they would be left without government. And if faith and intention be left without control, there can be no pure morality, and no perfect obedience. The wicked intention is the first element of moral wrong. To hold a free agent responsible for this first voluntary act, is the most efficient, and for that reason, the most merciful rule. To teach the party governed, that he is responsible for his evil thoughts and criminal intentions, is to check vice in its inception. So, to teach him that he must believe the truth is to secure his love and reverence for it, and his more ready and hearty obedience to it; for obedience will always be more faithful to a law believed to be just in itself, than to one whose justice is disputed.

Whatever revelation God made to man, must have been just and true; and if just, it must constitute a rule of moral conduct; and if true, it must be believed. A perfect law in every particular, has a right to demand our perfect obedience, in thought, belief, and act.

The human legislator prescribes his law, and says to the party governed; "I have given you the best law I could; but it is still imperfect. I do not, therefore, ask you to believe it just; and if I did, my limited powers would not enable me to reach your thoughts and inten-

tions. But as the good of society imperiously requires government, and government must, of necessity, require obedience, you must obey my law in act, whatever you may believe and intend." But an Infinite Lawgiver holds a different language, and says: "My statutes are just and true in every particular. I, therefore, require you to think right, intend right, and act right; and I have the right, the knowledge, and the power, to enforce obedience in all these particulars."

Of the different modes of publication, and of the advantages of a mixed code.

The law governing any associated body of men, either civil or ecclesiastical, may be promulgated in different ways; and, therefore, may be either written or oral, or partly written and partly traditional. "But the manner," says Blackstone, "in which this notification is to be made, is matter of very great indifference. It may be notified by universal tradition and long practice, which supposes a previous publication, as is the case of the common law of England. It may be notified, *viva voce*, by officers appointed for that purpose, as is done with regard to proclamations, and such acts of parliament as are appointed to be publicly read in churches and other assemblies. It may lastly be notified by writing, printing, or the like; which is the general course taken with all our acts of parliament." (1 Com. 46.)

As language, whether oral or written, is still but a sign or medium, by and through which our intelligence communicates ideas to another, the character of the law itself is not affected by the mere manner of its publication. The will of the legislator exists without any regard to the mode of publication; and the publication is only evidence of that will.

These two modes of publication have their respective advantages. A written code is more concise and portable, while a traditional code is more full and complete. A mixed code combines the advantages of both, and is most preferable in practice. The two parts of a mixed code mutually explain and illustrate each other. And in speaking of the unwritten law, Blackstone, the learned commentator on the laws of England, says:

“With us at present the monuments and evidences of our legal customs are contained in the records of the several courts of justice, in books of reports and judicial decisions, and in the treatises of learned sages of the profession, preserved and handed down to us from the times of highest antiquity. However, I, therefore, style these parts of our law *lex non scripta*, because their original institution and authority are not set down in writing, as acts of parliament are.” (1 Com. 64.)

“But here a very natural and a very material question arises,” says the same learned commentator, “how are these customs or maxims to be known, and by whom is their validity to be determined? The answer is, by the judges in the several courts of justice. They are the depositaries of the laws, the living oracles, who must decide in all cases of doubt, and who are bound by an oath to decide according to the law of the land. * * * And, indeed, these judicial decisions are the principle and most authoritative evidence that can be given of the existence of such a custom as shall form a part of the common law. The judgment itself, and all the proceedings previous thereto, are carefully registered and preserved, under the name of records, in public repositories set apart for that particular purpose; and to them frequent recourse is had when any critical question arises, in the determination of which, former precedents may

give light or assistance. * * * For it is an established rule to abide by former precedents when the same points come again in litigation; as well to keep the scales of justice even and steady, and not liable to waver with every new judge's opinion, as also because the law in that case being solemnly declared and determined, what before was uncertain, and perhaps indifferent, is now become a permanent rule, which it is not in the breast of any subsequent judge to alter or vary from, according to his private sentiments; he being sworn to determine, not according to his own private judgment, but according to the known laws and customs of the land; not delegated to pronounce a new law, but to maintain and expound the old one."

To those who are engaged in the practical administration of the law, the advantages of a mixed system will become apparent. A written code can only conveniently embrace the leading principles of a system, expressed in general terms. It cannot be so full or complete as the unwritten law. In the application of a written system to particular cases, where it is not aided and illustrated by the unwritten law, the difficulties would seem to be great. It is very doubtful whether any complete system of written law, suited to the various wants of a civilized people, could be formed and practically put in operation, without the aid of the unwritten law. It would necessarily be either so concise as to be defective, in omitting necessary provisions, or so voluminous and minute, as to become inconvenient for ordinary cases.

Laws, as a general rule, can only lay down general principles, expressed in general terms; and one general principle may embrace a number of subordinate principles legitimately flowing from it. The subordinate principles, when not developed in the law itself, must

be discovered and applied by the courts; otherwise there is a defect of justice. If, then, a written code be adopted, and the unwritten law excluded, the judges will find it more difficult to administer such a system, and they will be forced, either to pass by wrongs without a remedy, or they must take the responsibility of extending the principles of the statute to doubtful cases.

It would seem to be exceedingly difficult, in the nature of things, to adopt an entire written code that will be sufficiently full and complete, so as to embrace all the cases demanding relief under civil government. It is by a combination of the two parts of written and unwritten law that the most just, complete, and convenient code can be formed. The statute law will then embrace all new changes, and also the more ordinary, every-day provisions, while the unwritten law will contain the more minute provisions necessary to be applied in critical cases. The Romans, Spaniards, and Swedes had a common law. (Blackstone's Com. 66, 74.)

Of tradition as a medium of transmission.

It has been often objected that tradition is an unsafe medium of transmission; and those who urge this objection usually illustrate it by referring to the uncertain nature of general reports circulating in a community. That tradition is an uncertain medium of transmission when used for the preservation of unimportant matters, in which no one is particularly interested is true.

But such is not the case with regard to laws. They are matters too deeply important to be neglected or forgotten, for the reason that they not only regulate the dearest interests of society, but they are of daily application, and competent tribunals are made the depositaries,

as Blackstone says. That tradition, under such circumstances, and in reference to such important matters, is a safe, certain and efficient means of transmission, is demonstrated in the case of the common law of England; for after all the changes that have been made in that system, and all that may hereafter be needed, the great mass of its provisions will most likely remain.

The true character of laws is best seen and understood when they are practically administered. As that military commander is the most consummate chieftain whose plans work out most beautifully upon the field of battle, so that system of law is the best which produces the most practical good. And our great judges, our best law writers, from Lord Hale to Chief Justice Marshall, and from Blackstone to Kent, are almost, if not quite, unanimous in their admiration of the common law, and in their condemnation of all hasty and crude changes in the system. If we look into the numerous and perplexing cases that have arisen in courts of justice in modern times, we shall find that the most difficult questions have been in reference to the construction of statutes — that the most uncertainty and confusion have been produced by these frequent changes — and that of the two, the common law is the more uniform, consistent, and certain.

Mr. Justice Cowen, among other things, says:

“There is scarcely any branch of legal policy more worthy of being enforced than that which aims to keep the laws of a nation the same in all respects from one age to another, except in points where change becomes absolutely necessary.” “Time,” says Lord Hale, “is wiser than all the wits in the world, and the law which has been tried by it has the highest possible evidence in its

favor. Time is the schoolmaster which teaches law most effectually, and without which it cannot be generally known."

If, then, a great system of law, so nearly approaching perfection, and, as Sir Matthew Hale says, "is vast and comprehensive," and "consists of infinite particulars," has been transmitted by tradition from age to age, in a form so fixed, certain, and uniform, upon what ground can we say that such a medium is unsafe in the transmissions of laws in the preservation of which every member of the association is so deeply interested?

The abstract objection against tradition as a medium of transmission is not only shown to be unfounded by the historical test in the case of the common law of England and other countries, but also by the history of the creation and of God's early dealing with mankind, which was transmitted by tradition from age to age, for the space of two thousand years, until written out by Moses; speaking of which, Dr. Spring says: "Before his word was reduced to writing, these various communications were narrated, treasured up in the memory, and became a traditionary revelation."

So far as abstract considerations go, they are not against the position that the law of Christ is partly written and partly oral; but for the reasons already given, and others that will be hereafter stated, they would seem strongly to support it. And it was well admitted by Dr. Spring, in reference to this law of Christ, that "there is no absurdity in supposing it to be partly oral and partly written, while both might be amplified and interpreted by one another."

Of the inspiration and authenticity of the written law of Christ.

In the nature of things, before the mind can arrive at the conclusion that the Bible is inspired, there must be sufficient proof of this fact. This evidence must either be found in tradition, or in the book itself, or in both combined. If the point to be proved is simply the historical existence of the Scriptures, then the testimony of ordinary history will suffice. In other words, it will be competent to prove that the separate books, bearing the names of the writers, were in fact written by them; for ordinary history can show us that those books were in existence at a certain period, purporting to have been written by the authors whose names they bear; and this will, *prima facie*, prove their authenticity and genuineness, as the same kind of testimony would show the authenticity of the works of any other writer. It will also prove, *prima facie*, the integrity of the writers, for this must be presumed until the contrary is shown. But when we prove the authenticity of the books of the New Testament—that they were in fact written by the persons whose names they bear, and at the periods mentioned, we have not established anything more than the facts stated in each of the books themselves. And if the fact of inspiration be not stated in the books, we must of necessity, resort to other testimony, or admit the assumed fact without proof. In short, we must look to proof outside the record.

It is, indeed, insisted that the inspiration of Scripture is, in part, proven by evidence seen upon the face thereof, although not expressly stated in words. Thus the Rev. Hartwell Horne says: "The miracles related in the old and new Testaments are proofs that the Scriptures

were given by inspiration of God." (Introduction, vol. i., p. 204, 7th ed.) And Dr. Spring says: "These books speak for themselves that they are not the work of men." (Dis. 28.)

It would seem somewhat difficult to understand how the miracles related in the Bible can be a proof of the inspiration of the books in which they are simply recorded. We can well understand how these miracles were proofs of the character and capacity of the persons by whom they were performed, but it is not so easy to see how they can constitute proofs of the inspiration of books written long after they occurred. The facts related may constitute proofs. This inherent capacity, as proofs, exists in the facts themselves, no matter when or by whom related, so they are duly authenticated. If, therefore, the same facts are related in any other book, and their simple relation proves the book inspired, then the history of Josephus is inspired, because true miracles are related therein.

It is not, then, the character or quality of the facts related that proves the inspiration of the historian. These facts may be related by an uninspired historian as well as any other class of visible facts. And when Dr. Spring says the Scriptures "speak for themselves that they are not the work of men," he does not mean to say that they state so in express words; but that the extraordinary character of the facts and doctrines stated is proof that the mind of man could not have originated the system therein recorded. But this relates only to the nature of the matter recorded; and not to the inspired character of the record itself. That which assumes to be a deposition may contain important and true evidence, and yet this will not entitle it to be read. It must have been properly taken. And I apprehend that

if an honest, yet uninspired historian, had been with Christ, and witnessed his miracles, and had, to the best of his ability faithfully recorded what he saw, and that this record had come down to us, neither Dr. Spring nor Mr. Horne could have pronounced as to its inspiration, simply because of the character of the matter related.

It may well be conceded that the human mind is competent to determine the extent of its own powers, and that, consequently, the system recorded in the Scriptures could not have originated with man. But this is not the only fact to be proven. We wish also to know whether the Scriptures contain *nothing but the truth*; and when we reach the conclusion that the record is inspired, we are satisfied that it contains no falsehood. The inspiration, when once established, is a conclusive guaranty that the record is true.

But how can the human mind assume the capacity to determine, from the face of the record itself, that there have been no additions or omissions? The capacity to decide upon the face of the record, that no changes have been made, must be equal to the capacity to originate. Suppose some texts omitted, and some interpolated, would the human mind be able to restore the mutilated text to its original form? And with a copy of the original Scriptures before him, would not the forger be able to make so good an imitation as to defy detection by a simple comparison of the two, when it was unknown which was the genuine record?

Of the logical course of examination to ascertain the inspiration of the authors of the New Testament.

What, then, is the logical course of examination which will lead an original inquirer to the conclusion that

the New Testament Scriptures are inspired? The point to be proven is that these books are all, and each, of them inspired records, containing only the truth, and written by the authorized agents of God.

It is obvious that any being inspired by God, for a given purpose, must be His agent for the end intended. The principal who, in virtue of his own nature, possesses a mass of powers, may delegate them in smaller or larger portions, at his pleasure. So, God can delegate inspiration and authority to one or more individuals for one specific purpose only, or for several specific purposes. In such cases, the inspiration and authority will be confined to the specific purposes mentioned in the commission. It is also obvious to common sense that when power is delegated from a principal to his agent, that the principal must himself give the evidence of that fact. Power and inspiration could not flow from God without His consent, and the evidence of such a delegation to another must necessarily come from him. His act alone can constitute such evidence. And this evidence must be of such a character as to be apprehended by the persons to be affected by the acts of the agent; otherwise, the fact of agency could not be known to them.

With these principles in his mind the inquirer takes up the New Testament and any other history relating facts bearing upon the question. He regards them all as placed upon the same ground — as simple, uninspired history. He considers the New Testament writers as men, competent, without inspiration, to state facts they witnessed, and relate discourses they heard. The genuineness of their works, and the integrity of the writers, are proved to him in the same way, and by

the same evidence, as the works and integrity of the other historians he may consult.

The miracles of Christ were visible acts. So, His discourses were delivered in human language, and could be recorded, as any other discourses. The inquirer becomes satisfied, from the testimony, that the miracles related were in fact performed by Christ. From his knowledge of the more obvious and familiar laws of nature, he knows they could not have been the acts of men, and he draws at once the conclusion of Nicodemus, that no man could do those things, except God be with him. The performance of the miracles is established by the historical testimony, and the miracles, when proven, establish the character and capacity of Christ.

The inquirer is then prepared to believe Christ upon His word; for if he is God, He cannot lie; and if He be not God, but only an inspired agent, still he cannot lie as to the facts of his agency and inspiration. Whatever account, therefore, the divine or inspired person gives of his character and of his mission, must be believed, because God, by His own act, has conclusively established the veracity of the person, in reference to those matters. Whenever such person assumes to act in his capacity as such agent, he must be believed. Then as to what Christ said, the same simple historical testimony relates to it. Matthew and John heard it, and have left their record. So, the historical testimony equally proves the miracles, and discourses, and acts of the apostles. The miracles performed by the apostles prove them to have been veracious and competent witnesses, and their testimony, as to facts, must be true.

From the testimony of the New Testament, he learns that Christ said He would build His church, against

which the gates of hell should never prevail — that He commanded His followers to hear this church — that He commissioned the eleven to teach all nations — that they did set up the Kingdom, the church, and put the law of Christ into practical operation. By the record he is informed how the church was practically governed — what was its character, what were its powers as then exercised, and that the whole deposit of faith was left by Christ with the Church. And his reason and common sense assure him that Christ, like any other founder of a government, would necessarily make the institution created by Himself, the depository of the laws intended for its own direction. He finds it historically related, as a matter of fact, that long after the organization of the Church, a difficult question arose among its rulers; that to settle this question the Council of Jerusalem was called; that some of the apostles, as well as other governors of the Church, participated; that this body rendered a final and conclusive decree, declaring the law applicable to a particular case; that this decree was the act of the Church.

Having thus arrived at the knowledge of the fact that the Church is an infallible witness, he finds, by examining her history, that she has attested the fact that the works of the New Testament authors, including those of Mark and Luke (who were not apostles), were the inspired word of God, originally deposited with the Church. In this way the inquirer arrives at the conviction that the canon of Scripture is complete, containing all the inspired books, and only such. With him ordinary history proved the miracles and discourses of Christ and His apostles; they proved the institution and character of the Church; and the Church proved the inspiration of the New Testament writers; the chain

of testimony is complete, and he has supernatural or inspired testimony to the fact of the inspiration of each writer, of each book, of the New Testament.

It would seem exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, upon any other authority, to establish the inspiration of all the books composing the New Testament, especially those of Mark and Luke. These writers perform no miracles, so far as we are informed; and we have no testimony of Christ as to their inspiration, nor do any of the apostles tell us they were inspired, nor do the writers themselves claim any inspiration. So far from Mark or Luke saying they were inspired historians, the latter, in his preface, seems to write as an ordinary historian, as he states he received the facts recorded from the witnesses who had delivered them to him. And if they had stated they were inspired, such a statement alone, made by persons whose veracity was not first divinely attested, could not have proven it to be true, as it would have been only that human testimony which any impostor could have given, without the fear of direct contradiction. To prove the performance of miracles, or the delivery of discourses, which are external matters, cognizant by the senses, and seen and heard by a number of witnesses, who are mutual checks upon each other, the testimony of ordinary history is amply sufficient. But when we come to prove the higher fact of the secret and invisible communication of the Holy Ghost to the minds of Mark and Luke, we must have testimony as high as the fact to be proved — that of miracles, or of persons whose veracity has already been divinely attested. A man cannot prove his own inspiration by his own testimony, independent of that of God. This secret inspiration could not be known to others not inspired, and the ordinary historian could

not give evidence of that which, from its nature, could not be known to him without the visible attestation of God.

Of the Unwritten law of Christ.

From the simple history of the New Testament it is shown that Christ appeared among men as a lawgiver — that He promulgated his law orally, that He gave no command that His laws should be reduced to writing, but having verbally instructed His apostles, He commissioned them to act as His agents. These inspired agents carried out the commission, and the kingdom was governed for many years before any part of the law was written. This unwritten law was the original law of the Church. It was given and practically administered in that form, and in that form was obligatory upon every member of the association.

This being the original and established form of the code, to substitute the written law for the unwritten, either in whole or in part, would require the affirmative act, either of the lawmaker Himself or of His lawful agent. If, then, it is true, that only a part of the original law of Christianity has been written, the entire code must consist of both these parts, unless the unwritten portion has been expressly repealed.

If our Lord intended that the law governing the Church organized by Him should become a written code, it would seem very natural and reasonable that He should have made provision for that end, as was done in the case of the Old Law. It would seem difficult to understand why God, intending to accomplish the same end in both cases, should make express provision to secure the end in one, and not in the other. Upon the theory that He intended the code to be written in

the one, and not in the other, we can well understand why God acted differently in the two cases.

We meet with no intimation, either in the words of Christ or those of His apostles, that any such intention ever existed. And when we come to look into the books themselves, and consider their history, we shall see abundant reason to negative any such idea. We find that these books were the result, not of any direction by Christ that they should be written, but of casual circumstances. Matthew wrote for a specific class of readers, and Luke wrote for a single individual. The Epistles of Paul were evidently written to different churches and individuals, whom he could not visit at the time, and for the purpose of correcting some local corruptions or heresies. The very form in which the books of the New Testament are written, not being regular and methodical, shows they were not intended by their authors to form a complete code of law. Many of the most important doctrines mentioned by St. Paul were very concisely stated, and introduced parenthetically, and as illustrations. The apostles were expressly commanded to preach, and this mode of teaching became obligatory. But as to teaching by written instructions, there seems to have been nothing determined by Christ.

As the unwritten law was the first law of Christianity, and the only law for many years; before the written law could become a part of the code, it would be requisite to establish its validity by some affirmative act. The mere fact that portions of the law were subsequently written, would not, of itself, show any intention to substitute those portions for the entire code. If we go back to the earliest British statutes now extant, the fact of their existence as written law, and the passage of numerous statutes since, by parliament, will not afford the

slightest evidence of any intention to abolish the common law, except where it has been expressly superseded, or the statute is manifestly incompatible with it. But it may be justly said, that the statutes themselves recognize the common law as a part of the law of the realm. This is true; but it would seem to be equally true that the written, expressly admits the existence of the unwritten law as part of the Christian code. Of this in another place.

Those who insist that the written word contains the entire law of Christ, are bound it would seem, by every rule of sound interpretation, to show at least one of two things: 1. That the written law contains all of the original unwritten law; or 2. That admitting it not to contain all the original law of the kingdom, it has been by competent authority, expressly adopted as an entire substitute for it. For unless one or the other of these positions can be satisfactorily proven, the presumption of law and right reason would always be, that the code consists of two parts, the written and the unwritten.

The same matter further considered.

As to the first position, that the written includes all of the unwritten law, there is no satisfactory proof; but the evidence seems clearly to establish the contrary fact. It is true that St. Luke says, in the preface to his Gospel, that he had "perfect understanding of all things from the very first"; and in his Acts of the Apostles he says, "the former treatise have I written of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach"; yet these general expressions are not only limited by his own statements in other places, but by the statements of other New Testament writers and by the facts recorded by them. For Luke himself informs us that

Christ was seen of the apostles forty days after His Passion, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; and this writer nowhere assumes to give these instructions of our Lord in full. Besides, Matthew, John and Mark record numerous facts and instructions of our Lord not mentioned by Luke; and St. John tells us that many other things Jesus did, which he does not himself record, and says, in strong hyperbolic language, that if they all should be written, every one, the world itself, he supposes, could not contain the books. And none of the subsequent books assume to contain all the instructions of Christ or of His apostles. Indeed this position is so clear, that I am not aware of any writer who maintains the contrary.

In reference to this matter, Dr. Spring says: "The Saviour appeared among men as a living teacher. We have no evidence that His personal instructions were delivered to the apostles in writing, or that the preaching of the apostles was in any other way than orally. On the other hand, we do not deny that both Christ himself, and His apostles, uttered many and important truths that were never committed to writing." Again; "But there is no evidence that any of them (the instructions of Christ and His apostles), or even any of the books of the New Testament, were written until years after His ascension into Heaven." (Dissertation 17.)

These are very important admissions, and while they concede no more than the simple truth, they give rise to very serious and interesting inquiries.

Was Christ a lawgiver? As such, was He powerless, incompetent, or frivolous? In giving His law, did He so exhaust His powers that He made no provision for the preservation and perpetuation of His entire code?

Or did He intend that the Christians of the first age should be governed by a full and complete code of law, while the Christians of all succeeding ages should be governed by a mutilated code, robbed of "many and important truths?" Did He intend that the Church, in the days of the apostles, should believe one system of faith, and His followers, in after ages, should believe another? On the contrary, did not Christ build but one Church, for the government of which He gave but one law? And did He not intend that this entire code, as He delivered it, should govern this one Church, from the first even to the last period of her existence upon earth? Did not the Christians of the Apostolic day live under the same dispensation and under the same code of law as we of the present? Were they not required to believe the same things?

Our Lord promised His apostles the Holy Ghost, who should "teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever He had said unto them." (John xiv, 26). And after making this inviolable promise, He gave them that imperative command to "teach all nations to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This command was the last one given—was to take effect and be put in force on and after the day of Pentecost, and, therefore, included all things Christ had before that day commanded the apostles to observe, except the few commands specially limited to them, such as the command to tarry in Jerusalem. The command in the commission is general, and for a general purpose, and not limited by any other text; and, therefore, must be taken in its widest sense compatible with the general scope of the whole system. The apostles executed this commission, for St. Paul tells the elders of Ephesus: "I have not

shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts xx, 27). And the same apostle says to the Galatians: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And so important did St. Paul esteem this doctrine that he repeats it in the next verse, almost in the same words. (Gal. i, 8.)

If, therefore, the Gospel received and taught by the apostles, was made up of certain requisites, no man is authorized to preach any other Gospel made up of any other requisites, either more or less. How, then, can the Gospel which does *not* contain "many and important truths uttered by Christ and His Apostles," as Dr. Spring admits, be the same gospel preached by the Apostles? If we can omit "many and important truths" and the identity of the gospel be not destroyed, what limit can there be to such omissions? Suppose we strike from the constitution of the United States, "many and important" provisions, would it still be the same constitution?

As the law of Christ was originally promulgated orally, and reduced to practice in that form, and for many years the entire church was so governed—and as the *written* law is conceded not to contain "many and important truths"—before we can assume that the entire unwritten code has been repealed, the proofs should be of the highest and most conclusive character. The intention thus to mutilate a great system of law, given for the government of the same perpetual institution, and given by a Divine Legislator, Who could make His law perfect at the beginning without the necessity of subsequent change, ought to be shown by proofs remarkably clear and full; for it would seem a strange

anomaly, that a lawgiver of such a character should so defectively arrange His government, that His code should become incomplete in a very few years after its promulgation; thus leaving the subsequent subjects of His kingdom not so well governed as those at the beginning. Such a result might well happen from the imperfect system of a human legislator, and contrary to his intention. But how the law of Christ could be thus crippled, contrary to His intention, is most difficult to imagine. For we cannot conceive why the "many and important truths" should have been uttered by Christ and His apostles, unless it was intended they should be preserved; nor can we think that Christ and His apostles were idle or powerless—that they uttered truths to be forgotten—enacted laws not to be obeyed—and that they promulgated important principles, forming a part of one entire system of law, that they, nevertheless, intended should be lost.

It is true that St. John says: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." But this he spoke of his own gospel only, as can be seen in the preceding verse. If the apostle intended anything exclusive in this statement, so as to show that his gospel was alone necessary and sufficient, independent of any other part of the law, then he intended to exclude, as well the other Scriptures, even his own Epistles and his Revelations, as the unwritten law itself.

Of the Scriptural view of the written and the unwritten Law.

The apostle speaks of the character of all Scripture, without distinction, in this way:

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnishes unto every good work.”

Now, when St. Paul says that all Scripture is profitable to produce a certain end, does he mean to say that it is alone sufficient? Does he mean to say to Timothy, “The Scripture is the only rule necessary”? In other words is there anything exclusive in the form of expression used? I cannot so understand it. On the contrary, the term profitable gives to the apostle’s language a limited meaning, and shows that his intention was not to exclude tradition, but to include “all Scripture,” as being profitable to produce the end stated. Two or more means may be profitable to produce the same given end, and we may, therefore, speak of each one separately, and say it is profitable for that purpose. The term, in this place, means useful, advantageous; and to speak of the sole agent in producing the indicated end, as being profitable, would seem not to be accurate. The word able or sufficient would express such exclusive meaning better.

And when we are told in Scripture, in one place, that we are justified by grace; in another, by faith; in a third, by confession and faith; in a fourth, by baptism; and in a fifth, by keeping the commandments, we cannot say that these expressions, though much stronger than the word profitable, are intended to exclude all agents in justification and salvation, except one only, in each of the cases mentioned. On the contrary, we must understand that all these agents form parts of one entire system, and all combine to produce the result stated.

The language of St. Paul, in portions of his other

epistles, seems still more explicit. To the Corinthians he says:

"Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you." (I Cor. xi, 2.)

To the Thessalonians he says:

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." (II Thess. ii, 15, iii, 6.)

These passages are very much to the point, and give rise to very important reflections.

It must be conceded that the Thessalonians had been taught the entire law of Christ; and this entire law the apostle calls "the traditions," whether taught by word or epistle. That which was taught by word and that by epistle were equally obligatory; and they were both placed upon the same footing, and entitled to precisely the same confidence and obedience.

Under the Catholic theory, the Scriptures and Tradition are held to be but constituent of one whole system of law, each part containing nothing but the truth, and both parts, taken together, only containing all the truth. There can be no theoretical contradiction or inconsistency herein; and there can be none, in point of fact, unless truths have either been lost, or error added to the system, by one or both of these parts.

It is true, that in systems of civil law, composed of two parts, written and unwritten, there is always a provision, that where they conflict, the written law shall

prevail, as being the last will of the legislator. This provision is predicated upon the ground that human legislation is imperfect—that it may need amendment—that the lawmaker is actually fallible, and for that reason may contradict himself. Hence such a provision becomes necessary. But the same principle cannot apply to a system of law made by Christ.

Blackstone says, as we have seen, that the judges of the courts are the depositaries of the common law—that they determine what it is—and that their decision is the most authoritative evidence that can be given of the prior existence of such a custom. But the learned commentator did not mean to say that such a custom became a law because of these decisions; for the judges are not delegated to pronounce a new law, but to declare and maintain the old one. The courts only declare the law—the legislative power makes it. The law was in existence before the courts so declared it. So, with the Catholic Church. Under her theory, she is the depositary of the entire law, not delegated to pronounce a new law, but simply to declare and expound the old one. Her decisions do not create a law—do not make that law which was not before such—but are simply evidence of the law “once delivered to the saints.”

The fact being undeniable and conceded, that “many and important truths uttered by Christ and His apostles were never committed to writing;” and, therefore, not to be found in the New Testament, it is difficult, upon any system of sound logic, to reject Tradition. Such a rejection leads to so much confusion and contradiction, that I was wholly unable to find any warrant, either in Scripture or common sense, to support it. It is derogatory to Christ, as a lawgiver, and to the Church as an institution founded by Him.

To maintain that God created anything in vain, is to impute to Him an infirmity, deeply disparaging to His character as Creator. We may not be able to comprehend the exact use for which portions of the Universe were designed, but we can see the purpose for which most portions of the visible creation were made; and the consistency and beauty of these portions should satisfy us that nothing was made in vain, though it be true that our limited intellects will not enable us to scan the entire creation at a glance, and designate the precise purpose for which each portion was made. So, if we say that Christ made any portion of His code of law in vain, we impute to Him an idle frivolity deeply disparaging to His dignity as a Divine Lawgiver.

The true theory.

It occurred to me that Christ would never make a system of law, and permit it to be either mutilated or lost; that He never would have committed His law to the world at large—to aliens and strangers—to take its chances of preservation, like the teachings of mere philosophers; that He would perpetuate it entire, either by His special superintendence, or by depositing it with an inspired and protected guardian; that the latter method was not only most in accordance with reason and his system of governing men, but with the express declaration of Scripture; and that if He adopted either of these methods, the truths of the system, written or unwritten, would alike come down to us as originally given, that we might enjoy, if we would, the same advantages as the Christians of the early church. And I could not conceive why Christ should build a church against which the gates of Hell should never prevail, and which St. Paul declared to be the pillar and ground of the

truth, and yet not commit the very law intended for the government of this great institution to its keeping. The idea that Christ, as a Divine Legislator, should organize an institution, such as He and Paul described it, and yet it be incapable of knowing its own faith, and not a credible witness of the same — thus creating an association of living men, wide as the world, and durable as time, and yet so frail and unreliable as not to deserve the respect and confidence due even to ordinary civil institutions, would seem, upon its face, to be wholly inadmissible.

It did seem to me that those who reject Tradition, under the idea of attaining greater certainty, did, indeed, increase the uncertainty; not only by destroying a part of the law itself, but by attacking the credibility of the only proper and reliable witness to the inspiration and authenticity of the entire canon of Scripture. By conceding that “many and important truths” of the system have never been written, and must, therefore, be lost, because the testimony of the Church is unworthy of belief, the character of our Lord as a Lawgiver, and of His Church as a competent witness, is depreciated, and the whole subject left in irremediable doubt.

In the Catholic theory, there is a combination of all the proofs, as well as beauty, strength, and consistency. Every motive of credibility and every proof is therein preserved. Knowing that the art of printing would not be invented for fourteen centuries, and that the great mass of men would always be unable to read; and that, therefore, an entire written law interpreted by each individual for himself in the last resort, would be impracticable, our Lord, for these, and other reasons, adopted a method that must be practical everywhere, and at all periods; and, therefore, promulgated His law

orally, and commanded His apostles and their successors to do the same thing, leaving such portions of the law to be reduced to writing as after circumstances might render prudent and advisable. By this theory, the Church is the inspired depositary, witness, and interpreter of the entire code left by Christ and His apostles, so that no part of the law can be lost, and the code remains entire, without mutilation or change; and the work of Christ, and the institution founded by Him, remain perfect and complete, and worthy of the character of a Divine Architect.

The testimony of the Ancient Fathers.

In every examination regarding any question of fact connected with the history of the early Church, we must necessarily consult the Ancient Fathers—the historians and ecclesiastical writers of that period. The Catholic Church does not esteem them as inspired. They are held to be simple, but authentic witnesses to matters of fact, to wit: What were the doctrines held, and the observances kept by the Church in their day? If the Church held certain doctrines, and kept certain observances, then these are held to be true; and as to the historical fact, the testimony of the Fathers is heard.

In his debate with Bishop Purcell, Mr. Campbell said: “Among Protestants, the reason and authority of religious belief and practice is, ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ It is not important to ascertain when any opinion or practice began, nor who introduced it; but if it be not in the Bible, no matter how ancient it may be, it wants apostolic sanction, for the apostles sanctioned only what was written and ordained before their death. St. Clement and St. Ignatius, and St. Irenaeus, and all the other Saints in the Roman Calendar, were born too late

to sanction any article of faith or morals by their vote." (Debate, 277.)

That the saints were born too late to sanction any article of faith by their vote, he is right, provided he means to say that they had no right to create and make new additions to the law, and therefore could exercise no legislative power as to matters of faith or morals.

But in his debate with Mr. Rice, some years later, in speaking of the Greek and Latin Fathers as visionaries, mystics, and fond of old wives' fables, he says: "But I regard them as faithful witnesses of facts. I receive their testimony as honest men." (C. & R.'s Debate, 163.) And when speaking upon the proposition that "Christian baptism is for the remission of past sins," he quotes extensively from the Fathers, and says, among other things, "If neither the Bible, nor the Confession, nor the Greek and Latin Fathers are to be understood nor believed when affirming that baptism is for the remission of sins, what kind of evidence could satisfy him?" (D. 456.) And Mr. Rice is equally careful to call up the authority of the Ancient Fathers, when they are on his side of the question. In the debate regarding the baptism of infants, he says:

"For let it be distinctly understood, I appeal to the early Christian Fathers, not for their opinions, but I call them up as witnesses to a matter of fact, viz., that in their day, and so far as they know to the days of the apostles, the baptism of infants was universally practised." (D. 406.)

I could not but remark the gratification shown by each debater when he found himself in company with these "visionaries and mystics." Under such circumstances he failed not to "breathe freer and deeper."

Of the rules to be observed in consulting the Fathers.

The question whether a certain doctrine was held or a certain observance kept by the Ancient Church, is simply a question of fact, and can be the subject of historical examination and proof. If the Ancient Church held a certain doctrine, is that fact evidence that the doctrine is true? If the infallibility of the Church is conceded, there can be no doubt; but if that be disputed, the great difficulty of introducing such a doctrine into the Church, under the received maxims she did then hold, and the vigilance, sincerity, and means of detection then existing, is certainly a most powerful and decisive proof with the Christian who admits that the Church started right.

Protestant writers, in defending Christianity, assume the ground taken by Dr. Paley, when he says:

“The success of a religion founded upon a miraculous history, shows the credit which was given to the history; and this credit, under the circumstances in which it was given — i. e., by persons capable of knowing the truth, and interested to inquire after it — is evidence of the reality of the history, and, by consequence, of the truth of the religion.” (Ev. of Chr.)

The learned Divine was right. The credit given to such a story by such persons is evidence of its truth. Applying the same correct principle to the case in hand, it would seem to be true that the success of certain doctrines and observances in the early Church shows the credit that was given to them; and this credit, under the circumstances in which it was given — i. e., by persons not only capable of knowing the truth, but who did know it (because first well instructed), and interested to preserve it, and also vigilant in doing so — is evidence of the reality and truth of this miraculous history in

the first instance, then, after they did believe it, they were to be more interested in inquiring into and preserving the true faith as delivered.

Concluding remarks of this chapter.

The principle of acknowledging the authority of the apostolical traditions, both unwritten and written, was the faith of the ancient church; but the church was careful not to admit everything that might claim to be tradition. That the church was careful to admit only true traditions seems clear, and that the Scriptures were used as well as other proofs to show what were apostolical traditions, is no doubt true. But that a tradition was rejected simply because it differed from, while it did not contradict the Scriptures, could only be done in so far as they were alleged to be contradictory. Mere difference may not constitute contradiction. Every contradiction is a difference; but every difference is not a contradiction. If additional facts be preserved by tradition, these may not contradict the Scriptures, any more than the additional facts stated by St. Luke, contradict the Gospel of St. Matthew. It was only upon the ground that these additional facts were preserved by tradition, that its authority was admitted by the ancient church. There could have been no satisfactory reason but this.

It was by tradition that the Scriptures were attested, as a single extract from Origen will show:

“As I have learned by tradition regarding the four gospels, which are the only disputed ones in the church of God which is under heaven — that the first was written,” etc. (T. iii, Com. in Matt. p. 440. Euseb. H. i vi., c. 25.)

The Catholic Church has never admitted, or contended that she must receive as apostolical traditions all that may

be sought to be put upon her, as such; but she has been exceedingly careful not to admit any but such as were well attested by the church in all ages, and that she has always used both the unwritten and written law, to amplify and interpret one another. She has ever held it to be alike her duty to reject spurious traditions, as well as spurious Scriptures. The traditions of the apostles are not at present merely oral, nor were they communicated from former ages by word of mouth only, but were reduced to writing soon after the days of the apostles; and are found in the testimony of the Fathers, and in the decisions of the Church.

The learned Protestant Bishop Montague says:

"There are hundreds of particulars which have been instituted by God in point of religion, commanded and used by the Church, of which we own that the Scripture delivers or teaches no such thing." (P. 396. Cited by Demetrius A. Galitzin, in "A letter to a Protestant friend on the holy Scriptures," published by F. Lucas, Jr., Baltimore.)

I could never find the authority in the New Testament for keeping the first, instead of the seventh day of the week as a sabbath. The language of the Old Law is most explicit that the seventh day shall be kept. And not only is the language definite and certain, but the reason why God ordained that specified day is given; i. e., that the Creator himself rested on the seventh, and blessed the seventh day. (Ex. xx, 8-11.) To say, in the face of so clear a provision, that the observance of any other day of the week, is a compliance with the law, is to indulge a hazardous latitude with the explicit language of the lawgiver. But tradition informs us that the first was substituted for the seventh day of the

week, by the apostles, in honor of our Lord's glorious resurrection.

It has been often objected against the traditions of the Church, that our Lord told the Scribes and Pharisees that they had made void the law of God by their traditions. (Matt. xv.)

Our Lord certainly did condemn certain specified traditions; but how this condemnation of particular traditions can be construed into a general condemnation of all traditions, is certainly not obvious. If our Saviour had intended a general condemnation of all tradition as a medium of transmission, He would not have used language specially confined to a particular class of traditions then in existence. As Christ expressly confined His condemnation to one class of tradition, by what rule of rational construction can we make that general, which He chose only to make special? To confine expressly a provision of law to specified cases, is to exclude the idea of generality. When a lawgiver specifies a single error, and denounces that, the denunciation cannot be extended to other matters not designated.

CHAPTER II

OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The organization of the visible Church must follow from the character of Christ as a lawgiver.

If we concede that Christ was a lawgiver, then we must concede that He would necessarily organize His followers into a visible association. And as He was the sole founder of the system, He would naturally establish a visible kingdom. All lawgivers intend their laws to govern associated, not dispersed men. And each code of law is intended to govern one association only. When a just legislator founds a system, he always has in his eye the adaptation of his government to the condition of men united. For it is only in that state that men can be governed. And if Christ made a law to be practically obeyed by men on earth, he must have instituted a government HERE; and this government could not exist without a visible association of the parties governed. Assuming that Christ was a Lawmaker, the organization of the visible church must logically flow from that character. It would seem equally clear that if He did organize a visible association of men called a Church, He must have intended that there should exist in this association perfect unity of faith.

The end and purpose of union is rightful success.

It must be obvious that no great object is ever undertaken without the union of numbers. From a small

village debating society, through every grade of organization, up to the mightiest civil government on earth, the first end to be secured is union of effort.

If Christ intended the success of His system, He must have left sufficient means to attain it. If men who pretend to preach the same system of religion differ widely among themselves regarding what the system is, it at once produces confusion among all parties, both the teachers and the persons taught. It affords one of the most obvious and ready arguments against the truth of a system. The success of a mutilated or corrupted form of Christianity was no part of the Divine intention. Christ designed only the success of the system as He established it. And to secure this success, continued unity in the same faith once delivered, was indispensable.

I was myself for many years a Deist, and remember the weight the argument drawn from the divisions among Christians had with me, and how often I heard it in the mouths of all sceptics. At that time I knew nothing of the Catholic system, and nothing of the grounds upon which it assumed to rest. Had I been well informed in regard to it, I do not think I should ever have had much difficulty in believing the system of Christianity to be true.

The differences and consequent divisions among professed Christians have made more infidels than all other causes combined. If the diversity of views regarding different systems of religion found among mankind have the practical effect of retarding the progress of Christianity in the world, how much greater must be the effect of the divisions among those who profess the same system! Most men who are infidels, neglect or refuse to investigate. They satisfy themselves by the easy and

offhand reflection that there must be something radically wrong in Christianity itself, something not to be understood, or else the professors of the system would agree as to what it is.

The Mohammedan says to the Christian: "First agree among yourselves as to what your religion is, and when you have done that, then come to me. If you, who have studied this matter all your lives, do not understand it, how can you expect me to do so? You Christians preach so many different doctrines, and are split up and divided into so many parties, that you do not know yourselves what is right, and you are not, therefore, capable of instructing me."

The force of this reasoning is very readily apprehended by even ordinary minds, and makes a deep impression upon those persons who are naturally inclined to doubt. We unhesitatingly, and at once, draw the easy and ready conclusion, that there must be some great defect in a system that has provided no practical means of securing unity of faith, and about which there exists so wide a difference of opinion among those who profess both to believe and to understand it.

There is much more infidelity in the world than most teachers of Christianity believe.

Many men who will very readily admit to a known teacher of religion that they believe the system, for the purpose of avoiding an argument, because they care nothing about the system itself, are yet in a state either of great doubt or confirmed infidelity. Most of the editors of our daily and weekly political and literary papers write beautiful articles in praise of Christianity, while very few of them believe in it with any confiding faith.

This infidelity as a general thing, exists even without any systematic effort on the part of infidels to propagate their views. You may go into many houses, where you will find the Bible, and no infidel works; and yet most of the family will be infidels or sceptics, and show it most conclusively by their acts. I was a Deist before I read a work upon the subject; and this extended diffusion throughout society of unbelief is mainly owing to the divisions and disputes among Christians.

I speak of the practical effect of these divisions, and not of the effect they should have, in right reason, upon the minds of men. But the difficulty lies here. Most men are prone, from motives of convenience, or feelings of indolence, or present interest, to judge of things pertaining to the future by some summary method. They like to judge of such things in one mass, and dispose of them in the same way. You must first almost convince them of the truth of a system, before you can excite them to investigation.

Of the Scriptural proofs that Christ did organize such an institution, and contemplate such unity.

If we pass from this train of reasoning to the positive testimony of Scripture, we shall find the position most clearly sustained. Throughout the New Testament, when the general terms "the Church" are used, without being qualified by other words, or without being used in such a connection as to show a limited meaning, it is applied to the one visible universal church.

In St. Matthew's Gospel Christ says: "Tell the church"—"if he will not hear the church"—"upon this rock I will build my church." In the third chapter of St. Paul's first epistle to Timothy, the church he speaks of is plainly the visible church. In the second

chapter of Isaiah, speaking of the future church, we find the prophet using these words:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we shall walk in his paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”

Here the church is most beautifully compared to a house on the top of the mountains, exalted above the hills. There is surely nothing contemplated in this sublime passage but a visible church, in which “the Lord will teach us of his ways,” and in which “we will walk in his paths.” Connect this with the fourteenth verse of the fifth chapter of Matthew, where Christ says to His apostles: “Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.”

That perfect unity in this visible organization was intended by Christ, not only follows from the reason given, but it is shown by the written word, by the testimony of the Church in all ages, and by the admissions of Protestant writers themselves.

“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.” (John x, 16.)

“There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” (Eph. iv, 4, 5.)

“And he is the head of the body, the church.” (Colos. i, 18.)

“The house of God, which is the church of the living God.” (i Tim. iii, 15.)

No comments could add anything to the force of the extract from St. John: “There shall be one fold, and one shepherd.” And St. Paul says: “There is one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” All these are closely connected in the same sentence, and have the same power: and as there can be no divisions in the “one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” neither can there be in the “one body” (the church), but there must be the most perfect unity in all, or in none. Again, Christ is said to be “the head of the body, the church,” and if the head be not divided, can the body be? And Christ Himself laid down the general principle, that a “kingdom divided against itself cannot stand;” and the church of Christ is his Kingdom. (Dan. ii, 44; Luke i, 33.) The whole spirit of the system contemplates union. The whole drift of the New Testament seems to contemplate nothing less.

And for what purpose would disunion be desirable? What good in proportion to the evil, could be accomplished by it? It is true, I have sometimes heard it suggested in private argument, that the divisions in Christendom were productive of good. They created a sort of rivalry among the different parties, that naturally led to more industry, more research, and more activity, and consequently more was done. But such a state of things seems never to have been contemplated by the system. It was expected that Christians would do their duty from love of the cause, without being driven to it by party bitterness. Divisions, for a time, may produce more activity and more exertion. But they produce more prejudice, more bitterness, and more

hatred; and this activity and this exertion are turned, not so much against the common adversary as against each other. Mutiny in an army does not conquer the enemy.

Extracts from Protestant writers.

I will now make a few quotations from Protestant writers, to show the importance they attach to the union of the visible church.

"I agree with my friend Mr. C.," says Mr. Rice, "that the union of all the disciples of Christ is an object greatly to be desired. I go for Christian union upon Scriptural principles as zealously as he, and so do evangelical denominations generally, so far as I know. We differ not concerning the importance of the object, but concerning the proper method of securing it."

"Concerning Christian Union, let me repeat, we are all most decidedly in favor of it. What is the union of which the apostle speaks? It is the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." (Campbell and Rice's Debate, 770, 780.)

The writings of Mr. Campbell abound with many unanswerable arguments for union. In his debate with Mr. Rice, there are many fine bursts of eloquence upon this theme, only a few of which can be inserted here.

"In this sectarian and schismatic age," says Mr. Campbell, "we have assembled for the purpose of discovering, if possible, the roots of discord and the seeds of schism, which have unhappily alienated and estranged us from each other, that we may, peradventure, find some remedy for those wounds and grievances which have so disgraced our holy faith, marred its beauty, and impeded its progress in the world."

"But, my fellow-citizens, there is one point that can-

not be too deeply impressed upon your minds — that the union of Christians is essential to the conversion of the world, both at home and abroad.”

“What is the state of the case? We shall see that Christendom is at present in a distracted, agitated, disturbed condition, cut up or frittered down into sects and parties innumerable, wholly unwarranted by right reason, pure religion, the Bible — the God of the Bible. Before the high, and holy, and puissant intelligences of earth and heaven, this state of things is most intolerable.” (Id. 230, 783, 904.)

Extract from a Catholic writer.

I shall close this chapter with the following beautiful extract from an eminent living Catholic writer, as it expresses my own views in language far more beautiful and appropriate than any I could select myself:

“Nothing can be more beautiful in the conception of a Christian Church, than a perfect unity of belief. Such an idea is beautiful to the imagination, because it is the consecration of the first and most essential principles, whereon society is based. For the social union tends to merge the feelings of each individual in the general mass, and leads him to embrace mankind rather than individual men. And in like manner does the principle of religious unity tend to excite your love towards them, no longer as brothers in the flesh, but as connected with you by a holier and diviner bond, and assists towards inspiring every member of the community with all that can be reciprocally felt, in the nearest ties and connections of our nature. And if the very idea of a republic, or government, in which men were united by such real or ideal bonds, as that they fought side by side, or contributed towards the common weal, did seem

to them of old so beautiful and heavenly, that the very conception of such a state, embodied under outward symbols, should have been deified and worshipped, what shall we say of that sacred union which holds men together, not merely as constituents of a community, but as members of one mystical body; not cemented together by the sense of mutual want, or strung one unto the other by the ties of the flesh, or the interests of the world, but firmly united by the headship of One, in whom the sublimest thought reposes, as in its proper sphere, and inly communicating through the circulation of vital influences, passing from one unto the other; not contributing to the common stock the gifts or qualities of earth, but the fairest virtues, the most precious ornaments of our nature; not directed in their views towards a wordly aggrandizement or a passing glory, nor linked in a battle-field by a bond of hatred against a human foe, but looking upwards for their trophies and rewards to the peaceful smile of heaven, after they shall have contended together in the gentle strife of mutual and universal love.

“Then add the reflection, how this influence stretches beyond the reach of any other known sentiment among mankind; for, outstripping all the motives of sympathy among men of different countries, it flies over mountains, and seas, and oceans, and puts into the mouths of nations the most remote, and the most dissimilar, one canticle of praise, and into their minds one symbol of belief, and into their hearts one sentiment of charity. And, thus professing alike, they kneel in countless multitudes before one altar, and from the soul of each proceeds the golden chain which joins them unto it, which God joins unto the rest, which He holdeth in His hand, for in Him is the center towards which the faith of

all converges, and in His truth it is blended into uniformity and oneness of thought. Surely this is the idea which you would wish to conceive, of the efficacy and of the effects of that rule, which has been given by God, to produce unity of belief.

“But then also is this unity of faith subservient to another great end, to the evidence of our Blessed Saviour’s true religion. For He was pleased to declare that the unity observed among His followers should be among the strongest evidences of His heavenly mission. ‘And not for them only,’ He exclaimed, ‘do I pray, but for them also, who, through their word, shall believe in me; that they all may be one, as the Father in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.’ And that this unity is not merely of the heart, through love, but also of the mind, in faith, His blessed apostle hath abundantly declared. For according to him, if we wish to walk worthy of the vocation wherein we have been called, it must be not only by ‘humility, and mildness, and patience, supporting one another in charity,’ but we must be ‘careful to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace,’ so as to be ‘one body’ as well as ‘one spirit’ and to have ‘one faith’ as much as ‘one Lord and one baptism.’

“Not surely that charity, the beautiful and the perfect, steps not beyond the circumscribing line of religious unity, or that her genial influences, like a flower’s sweet odor, spread not abroad beyond the plant which first produces it; but universal as must be our love of men, this will be ever its noblest exercise, to wish and to strive that all be brought to that closer union and unity which is in and through faith.” (Dr. Wiseman, Moorfield Lectures, 77.)

CHAPTER III

THE GOVERNING POWER OF THE CHURCH

That a visible association of men cannot continue to exist without government.

As Christ did organize His followers into a visible body of men, upon certain joint terms common to the association, and with the intent to accomplish a joint purpose, it would seem to follow that some sort of government must have been instituted to keep the organization together. It may be safely assumed as a correct principle, that any and all kinds of organizations among men must come together for some common end, upon some terms; and that there must, of necessity, be some power in the association, placed somewhere, to settle disputes and questions respecting these terms. In other words, there must be government in every association of men, to which a law is given.

This necessity exists in all associations, and must, therefore, exist in the Church of Christ, as well as in all other collective bodies of men.

Since it is the right and duty of the superior to govern the inferior, and the correlative duty of the inferior to obey, that each may be kept in his proper sphere, and that order may exist, it follows that such government ought to possess the requisite powers to accomplish these ends. Order must exist in the system of Infinite Wisdom, and in everything proposed by Him to us. If, then, Christ formed a visible church, He must have given

it the principles essential to its continued existence. We cannot upon principles of reason or experience, conceive of a visible Church without government.

Christ must have placed the governing power somewhere in the Church.

If, then, Christ instituted any government in His church, He must have placed the governing power somewhere; either in the hands of a certain order of men, or in the hands of one man, or in the church at large.

It is a fundamental principle, that whatever power has the right to found a government at all, has a right to say in whose hands the governing power shall be placed. Civil governments are constituted by men, who, in the beautiful language of the Declaration of Independence, are all "created equal" and the just powers of civil government are immediately derived from the "consent of the governed," though mediately from God.

The people of the United States had the political right, in forming their Constitution, to frame their government in any shape they pleased; and they could have united, as they separated, the legislative, executive, and judicial powers. But with reference to the Christian government, it may be said, that while it is derived, not from the consent of the parties to be governed, but from Christ alone, it still possesses certain great, leading, and essential features, common to every system of law, intended for, and adapted to, the government of mere men.

When a mere fallible power founds a government, it would be very unwise to attempt to frame a complete and full system of laws in advance, and thus to leave out the legislative power; for the plain and simple reason, that the founder of the government could not fore-

see all the circumstances that might exist in the future, requiring an enlargement or modification of his code. Hence the fundamental or constitutional provisions of civil governments are, from their nature, confined to the more general principles of the system. But it is rational to suppose that an Infallible Legislator should, at some period, form a full and complete system of laws, to operate through all coming time. Christ did form a new code of law at the beginning of the new dispensation, embracing all the necessarily permanent portions of the system, and leaving no legislative power in the Church, except as to matters of discipline, in reference to which laws could not have been well made at the beginning, since changing circumstances might require a change in these mere disciplinary regulations.

The other indispensable powers of government — the executive and judicial — could not, in the very nature and reason of the powers themselves, have been exercised in advance. Laws are rightfully prescribed (which means both to make and publish) in advance of the commission of crimes: commands must be given before they can be obeyed or violated. But there must be a violation of law, before the judicial power is required to act; and this power must be exercised as often as cases may require, and must, therefore, continue in operation, so long as the Church itself shall exist in the world. The same may be said of the executive power. The occasion must arise before it is required to be used.

If these views be correct, it follows that one of two things must be true; either that Christ visibly presides on earth to exercise the judicial and executive powers of the Church, or He has delegated these necessary powers to others, to be exercised by them as His agents or officers. Again it follows that if Christ delegated this

authority to others, He must have confided it to one man, to an order of men, or to the whole Church collectively. In the latter case, each member of the Church would have equal power, as a part of the whole.

A Democracy is a government in which the governing power is placed in the people; and a pure Democracy, is where the people meet themselves in council, and make the laws. A representative Democracy, is where the people make and administer the laws through their agents. Now the Christian government is not a Democracy of either kind. It does not derive its just powers from the consent of the governed, nor is it in any manner founded by them. It is called a "Kingdom," not a Democracy. Christ was the sole founder of the system, and had the right to institute it in such form as seemed to Him best.

As the Church was intended for one united body, to extend undivided over the whole earth, and to exist for all coming time, the idea of placing the governing power in the hands of all the members, would seem inconsistent with the principles of government. That a law-giver, supreme in virtue of His own nature, should promulgate a positive and fixed law for the government of a certain association of men, and at the same time confide the governing power to all the members, would seem evidently inconsistent with His rights as the founder of the institution, and incompatible with the end intended.

We are, then, thrown upon the other two positions, that Christ either delegated the governing power in the Church to one man, or to an order of men. It could not, I think, be supposed that Christ would create but one office in His Church, as one office would be clearly insufficient for the duties to be performed. It would,

therefore, seem far more reasonable that our Lord would create several offices, in due subordination to each other, and confide the government of His Church to them.

It may be proper to remark that the officers of any government among men, only exercise delegated authority. The proper and only source from which this power flows, is the rightful founder of the government. The officer acts, not for himself, but he represents the sovereign power of the government, whatever that may be. If the people institute a civil government, then, according to the theory of that government, the sovereign power resides in them, in their collective capacity. And for the same reason, if Christ instituted any government among men, the sovereignty of the institution resides in Him, and every officer of such government must represent Him and Him only. It would, therefore, seem to follow, that, in delegating the necessary powers to govern the Church, it would be very unphilosophical to suppose that Christ would confide these powers to each and every member of the association — the very parties, and the only parties to be governed.

It then seems to me clear, that as Christ was a law-giver, He must have organized the church — that when organized, government in the church became inevitable — that this government, to be government at all, must be supreme, and have jurisdiction over all questions arising under the law — and that as Christ does not visibly exercise these powers on earth, He must, of necessity, have delegated them to others, who act as His agents.

If the Church was intended by Christ to exist for a greater period of time than the lives of those to whom the power to govern the church was originally given, there must be a succession of officers, or there must be

an end of the institution. It is so in all governments. The officers die — while the offices live on.

A civil government most usually exists for several centuries, and the Christian government is intended to continue to the end of time. If certain permanent offices are necessary to the existence of the church, then when one incumbent dies, another must come to fill the position, and this constitutes succession. So long as the officer must die, and the office must exist, so long the principle of succession must be acted upon. There is no other mode of continuing the institution. This is the case in all political governments, and must be so in all governments intended for men, where the offices are to be filled by men.

Whatever government Christ did adopt for His Church, must have been consistent with human nature. He could not be supposed to form a government for men, that would only answer for some other race of beings. Any government instituted by Christ must possess all the elements of a perfect system, one part having a due dependence upon another, so as to constitute a fitness and harmony in all its parts, that the combined whole may be practical, simple and efficient.

The true office of reason.

It must be conceded that while Christ never intended to suppress reason, the noblest attribute of man, He did intend to confine it within its legitimate limits, and to its appropriate objects. Like every other attribute belonging to inferior beings, it must be subject to rules and restrictions. It could not, therefore, be a true guide in reference to everything, and under all circumstances. But, while it is limited and restrained, it must be competent within those limits. And though all truth must

be strictly consistent and reasonable in itself, portions of it must, in the nature of things, be above the powers of limited reason.

It would seem to be a just conclusion, that every system of truth must possess some plain principles, readily comprehended by the fair exercise of reason, and some more complex and difficult, either entirely beyond the reach of reason, or requiring the utmost exertion of its power.

The fair exercise of reason would lead us to admit that in a supernatural system, there would be mysteries necessarily above the comprehension of reason. By the exercise of reason we can examine the proofs of Christianity, because these are external matters, coming legitimately within the jurisdiction of reason. From these proofs we can know the character of Christ; and from His Word we can ascertain the plain facts and principles of the system; and these will lead us to the institution founded by Him as the competent guide of all, in all things, mysteries included.

The laws of nature have been open to the observation of mankind from the beginning; and while we can, and do know the plain and more familiar laws of nature, so that we can pronounce with certainty that a particular effect or event, happening under a given state of circumstances, was a clear violation or suspension of these laws; yet we do not know, and may never know, all the laws of nature, and could not, therefore, be competent to speak decisively as to the true character of some events that have occurred, or that may hereafter occur.

The first principles of the science of mathematics, the most certain of all the sciences, are so simple that they can be readily understood by the infantile mind; yet the higher problems, which are mathematically demonstrable,

and are, therefore, equally true, and equally capable of being conclusively shown to be so, are so complex that it requires the utmost effort of the best intellects to understand them. And we may well suppose that there are mathematical truths that never will be known to man. So, the first principles of the science of civil government are simple, and easily understood, while there are others exceedingly difficult of practical application. The same observations are applicable to most, if not to all, the sciences. If it were not so, the powers and works of the great Creator would be limited to the entire comprehension of reason, and the creature would be equal, at least in intelligence, to his Creator.

The same inseparable incidents must belong to Christianity. Many of its truths are plain, simple, and easily understood, while some are difficult, and hard to be understood. To establish the truth of the system itself, the appeal must, in the first instance, be made to reason in some form. We can only predicate our faith upon testimony, and this must be fairly tested by reason, founded upon experience, before we can believe it. Now, among the matters that can be best known to man, is the true character of human testimony. Men all possess the same essential nature, and are in constant daily association and intercourse with each other; and, therefore, must be held competent to estimate the force and value of the evidence given by themselves. The gifted and accomplished young Judge Jones, upon his deathbed, used this language: "I have never been an infidel. I had examined the positive evidences for Christianity, and they greatly preponderated in favor of its truth; and, taken in connection with its appropriate fitness to man's wants and nature, it was, as a lawyer would say, a plain case upon the face of the papers." And

Dr. Johnson has said that no honest man could be a Deist, "after a fair examination of the proofs of Christianity." (Boswell.)

Among the matters that must be within the legitimate sphere of reason, and that must be well known and understood, are the plain, practical and luminous principles of government — those foundations upon which society itself is based. Men have been under government, in some form, from the earliest times, and must, therefore, be competent to understand the plain principles of that science, if there be any such in the system. Proceeding upon this ground, it has been my object to show the considerations, drawn from reason and experience, that naturally led me to form some idea of the leading and most apparent features of that government actually instituted by Christ. For it was plain to my understanding, that while governments must differ from each other in those respects that constitute them different governments, they must agree in those fundamental respects that constitute government itself.

The testimony of Christ as to the governing power of the Church.

In the last verses of Matthew's Gospel, before our Lord ascended into Heaven, and while he was with the eleven disciples in a mountain in Galilee, He said unto them :

"All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

The first part of this wide commission is, "Go — teach all nations."

This commission was first addressed to the eleven disciples, and constituted the office of teacher. They were to teach the nations to observe all things that Christ had commanded them to observe.

This right to teach is the most essential attribute bestowed upon the governing power in the Church. In the nature of mere civil government, as I have attempted to show in a previous chapter, the legislator could not rightfully require faith in the justice of his laws, for he would require a belief in what might be a falsehood. But in a government constituted by Christ, it is reasonable that faith should be required, as well as simple compliance in acts; for obedience will be more perfect when we believe in the unquestioned justice of a law; and Christ intended to create a closer union among the members of His church than exists among the citizens or subjects of a civil government, and faith was necessary for this purpose. If we obey a law because we are forced to do so, whether we think it just or unjust, we render but a reluctant and unwilling obedience. This is not the kind of obedience that an infinite lawgiver would require.

Faith, then, being required, the necessity of a power to teach becomes evident. This commission plainly distinguishes between two separate and distinct classes of men — teachers and persons taught; for while one class is commanded to "teach," the other class is commanded to "observe." In the reason and nature of things, there could not exist teachers without persons to be taught. The two classes must exist, or there could be no employment for either. The only command here

given to the eleven was to "teach and baptize"—the nations were to "observe." The commission was addressed to them as teachers, constituting a separate and distinct class of men, to whom the power to teach and baptize was given; and it was only as teachers, and in the duties as such, that Christ promised to be "with them to the end of the world." Christ first tells them, "Go teach," etc., and then in the same sentence immediately adds, "and lo, I am with you," only connecting His promised assistance with their teaching.

In the tenth chapter of St. Luke our Lord said to the seventy disciples, "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me."

Testimony of St. Paul.

St. Paul, in the tenth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, says:

"How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?"

It was clear that the preacher could not preach unless he was sent—that he could not send himself; and it is equally clear that the party to hear and believe was not the preacher sent. In other words, there were two classes—teachers and persons taught. St. Paul does not here give us any statement as to the manner of sending preachers, or as to who sends them. These matters are stated in other epistles.

The same apostle in his first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 28 and 29, says:

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles

—secondarily prophets—thirdly teachers. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?

This is explicit as to the fact that, in St. Paul's time, a certain order of men had the right to teach, and that all had not.

St. Paul (Hebrews xiii, 7, 17) uses this clear and explicit language:

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

It is difficult to conceive of language more explicit and more to the point than the foregoing extracts.

St. Paul says to his Hebrew brethren "Remember, them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow;" that is, whose faith do you follow. He first tells them to remember them who have the rule over them, and then tells them how they are to remember them, and that is by following their faith. In the second extract he is equally emphatic. He first says, "obey them that have the rule over you," and as if this was not sufficiently strong and clear, he adds, "and submit yourselves," and then gives them the reasons why they should obey and submit.

Now the terms rule, obey, and submit, can mean nothing in this connection but government and obedience. The word rule here means government; and to govern is to "control the will and actions of others, either by arbitrary power and authority, or by established laws." The rule or government which those orders

had over the Church, was the power to control the will and actions by established laws. The word obey here means "to comply with the commands, orders, or instructions of a superior"; and to submit is "to be subject; to acquiesce in the authority of another."

In the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul speaks of a certain order of men, consisting of several grades — apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, and pastors — all given for certain specific purposes, namely: "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," i. e. the Church; and the immediate end of this authoritative labor, this perfecting of the saints, this work of the ministry, this edifying of the Church, was, that the members of the church might "all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God"; and this unity of faith and knowledge must be perfect, "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ"; and the legitimate result or effect of this unity in this perfect knowledge of the Son of God is, that "we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine," "but speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ"; so that every part of this body, the Church, might be "fitly joined together and compacted"; and thus, being fitly joined and compacted, the "effectual working of every part" might make "increase of the body," thus answering the prayer of Christ for the unity of His followers, that the world might believe that the Father had sent Him.

In this epistle to the Ephesians, the apostle tells us that there was a certain order of men given for certain purposes, and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, he tells

us to "follow the faith of those who have the rule over us," and these are they "who have spoken unto us the word of God."

The Epistles of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, were addressed to them in their capacity as Teachers. The whole drift, spirit, and language of these Epistles show that Timothy and Titus had "the rule" over their respective churches.

The powers of government bestowed upon the Apostolical Church, continuing.

This was the process of governing the Church in the days of the apostles. There was a certain order of men that had the rule over the church. They taught, they ordained elders, they expelled heretics, and they, in a word, exercised all the powers necessary to govern the institution as it was then constituted.

The question then arises whether this order of men had succession, and still exists in the church. There can be nothing more plain and palpable than this, that if Christ did organize any visible church, and institute any government for it, and, therefore, did create OFFICES to be filled by men, and these offices were intended to continue so long as the church itself should last, either the first incumbents were to live while the church existed, or there must be a succession of officers. It follows also that so long as the church remains unchanged, the successor must have the same powers as his predecessor; for it is the office that gives power to the man, and not the man to the office.

Christ organized and perfected the Christian government, and made the permanent Christian code of laws for its guidance. The system came from Christ and His apostles possessing certain characteristics or

constituent principles. Either Christ intended to institute some government in the Church, or He intended to organize no visible church at all. For I cannot conceive of a continuing visible Church, the pillar and ground of the truth, without government. If He did institute such government, He must have placed the governing power somewhere in the Church; and, in doing this, He must have created certain offices, to which were given certain official powers; and those offices were intended to be filled by men, so long as the association should continue to exist. If there were no offices in the church, how could there exist any government? And how could offices exist without official power? And how could official power exist equally in each and every member of the association? In such case, who would govern and who would obey?

That He did create certain offices, is shown from the extracts already given, and from the language of St. Paul in his first Epistle to Timothy, where he speaks of "the office of a bishop" and "the office of a deacon"; and the only question to determine is, whether those offices were intended to continue in the church while the church itself should last. If Christ did create certain offices in the church, and there is no limitation as to the duration of the office, either by the mere temporary nature of the duty to be performed, or by the express words of the law creating the office, then the intent would seem to be plain, that the existence of the office would be commensurate with the existence of the system itself.

The Constitution of the United States organized a government. It is not stated in the instrument how long the system was intended to continue; and yet it was intended to be perpetual, for the reason that no limit is given.

When a corporation is created, and no limit put to its existence, it must be held to be perpetual.

By the Constitution, the executive power is vested in a president, and the judicial power in one supreme court, and such inferior courts as Congress may establish. It is not stated in express terms that the office of president shall exist so long as the Constitution endures; and yet this is the palpable intent, because the office is created as a part of the system, and must necessarily continue so long as the government itself shall last.

Knowledge cannot be inherited, but must be acquired, and each succeeding generation must be taught as was the preceding one. For this reason the duty of teaching is perpetual, because the system to be taught is so. *The power to teach was not personal to the apostles.*

That the commission constituted the authority of the apostles, and empowered and required them to teach all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them to observe, cannot be disputed. The only question is, whether the power thereby conferred was a power personal to them, and therefore temporary. If it gives no authority but to the apostles, upon whom it was supposed to be alone conferred, there could be no successors under this commission, and no authority to teach after the deaths of those to whom it was first given.

The command to teach, and the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," are so closely connected together, that the existence of the one must be commensurate with the existence of the other. If Christ then commanded the apostles and their successors to teach, He equally promised to be with them "alway, even unto the end of the world"; and He does not promise to be with them any longer than they have authority to teach. If this promise extends to

the successors of the apostles, the command to teach does also.

The power to baptize is also given in this commission, and forms a portion of the mass of inseparable powers bestowed upon the apostles as teachers. The power to teach is first given, and then the power to baptize those taught, which is only carrying out the power to teach, and forming a part of it; and, therefore, the power to teach and baptize must stand or fall together. If, therefore, the power to teach did not come down to the successors of the apostles, in virtue of the commission, the power to baptize did not. Thus, in so far as the commission is concerned, there is no power in the Church, since the days of the apostles, either to teach or baptize; and we must look to other portions of the Word of God for such authority, if it exist in the visible church at all.

The fact that the larger portion of the instructions given by our Saviour was given in terms personal to the apostles, is evident; and the fact that these instructions are applicable to us, unless they are limited, either by express words or by the nature of the command itself, is equally clear. Thus, for instance, the command given to the eleven to tarry in Jerusalem until the descent of the Holy Spirit, does not apply to us, for the command was but temporary, and could not extend beyond the event mentioned as its limitation.

The reason and truth of this rule will be apparent, I apprehend, upon a little reflection. Christ selected twelve apostles to be with Him during His ministry. They saw all His miracles—heard all His discourses, which were mostly given in terms personal to them, and received His last instructions, and saw Him ascend into heaven. The last thing He said to them was, “Go

teach, etc., teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (To observe.) He had instructed them personally for more than three years, and now He commands them to teach others to observe that which He had previously commanded them to observe. This commission applied the teachings of Christ, given in terms personal to the apostles, also to their successors. They were commanded to "tarry in Jerusalem until they were endowed with power from on high." When so endowed, they were to commence teaching. The date, therefore, when the commission was to take effect, was the day of Pentecost. Whatsoever Christ had, previous to that day, commanded them to do, they were to teach others to observe. Now, on that day, one of the things Christ had previously commanded the eleven to do, was to "teach all things whatsoever he had commanded them"; and this made it their duty to teach others to teach what they had been themselves commanded to teach. In other words, the phrase "all things whatsoever I have commanded you," would embrace all commands given before the time when this command was to be put in force, and would include in the words "all things whatsoever" the command "Go teach."

The phrase "all things whatsoever" is exceedingly general, and would include all commands. But according to the fifth rule of construction I have given, a general rule may be limited by a special clause. And it is upon this ground that I lay it down as a principle of construction, that all commands given by Christ in terms personal to the apostles, descend to, and are obligatory upon us, unless they are limited by express words, or by the temporary nature of the command itself. Unless the general clause, "all things whatso-

ever " be limited by some other clause, or by the nature of the command itself, its meaning remains unrestricted ; and " all things whatsoever " Christ commanded His apostles observe or do, are obligatory upon Christians in all ages.

Whenever associated men are divided, as they must be, into different orders, and the distinctions of those different classes, first separately and specifically pointed out, then any general direction must, by every rule of construction, be applied to each in his proper position. As a lawgiver, our Lord would consistently begin with the first and simplest elements of His system. And as all Christians, both lay and clerical, are still individual members of the Church, and bound, as such, to discharge all the duties of that capacity, our Lord would first teach His apostles their duties as simple Christians, and afterwards their duties as officers. And He would logically give them the commission in the close of His ministry, and in terms sufficiently general to include all that had been embodied in His permanent code.

It is a rule, that instructions from a superior to an inferior, acting in a certain capacity, are necessarily confined to him in that capacity, unless there be some express statement to the contrary. One man may fill several offices, where the duties are not incompatible with each other, and the same superior officer may supervise the inferior in all these different capacities ; and, in giving him instructions, would address him at the beginning in the capacity for which the instructions are intended. So it is in the commission. Christ addressed the eleven in their capacity as teachers. He first constitutes them such, and then the instructions and promise are applied to them in that capacity only.

There is another sufficient reason why the use of the pronoun "you," in the commission, could not restrict the command and promise to the eleven apostles.

In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, c. xv, v. 52, St. Paul, speaking of those Christians who are to be living at the end of the world, says: "We shall be changed." He says the same thing, in substance, in the fourth chapter to the Thessalonians. The pronoun "we" is here applied to those Christians who shall live many ages after the writer, although the pronoun is in the first person. But all Christians, in all ages, in the contemplation of the theory of St. Paul, constituted but one collective body or corporation, always existing, and always present, from the beginning to the end of the Christian era, and the use of the pronoun personal was strictly proper. So, when he says, "till we all come in the unity of the faith," he includes all the Christians of the future as well as of the then present time. In the same way, and for the same reason, when Christ constituted a perpetual college of teachers, in the contemplation of His theory, this college was then present, and would continue to be to the end of time, and the use of the pronoun was strictly proper, and His promised assistance to the end of the world was in just accordance with it.

It would then seem plain, that if Christ intended to limit the commission to the apostles, He would appropriately use the pronoun "you;" and that, on the contrary, if He constituted them a college of teachers, having perpetual succession, he could have used the same pronoun with the same propriety; so that the use of this pronoun is entirely compatible with either view. But it is not so with the phrase "end of the world," which

could not be used in the sense required to limit the promise to the apostles themselves for the reasons already given.

The persons appointed by the apostles exercised the powers conferred by the commission.

There is another mode of deciding the question, whether this commission extends to the successors of the apostles or not. When we see how the apostles put the system into practical operation, we may be able to arrive at a correct conclusion.

If Christ intended by this commission to create a certain office, having attached to it certain powers and duties, and this office was to continue while the church should exist, the question of succession is very simple and plain.

What powers did Christ bestow upon the apostles by the commission? What powers did He give to them in their capacity, as teachers? The power to "teach all things whatsoever I have commanded you," and the power to baptize. Now what incidents does the power to teach necessarily include?

1. The right to decide what construction they would give the law—in other words, what the law required, as of faith, and practice.

2. The duty of those taught to obey. "He that believeth not shall be damned."

3. The right to reject heretics.

These incidents are inseparable from the power to teach. There would seem to be no question on that point. Now if we find that those who succeeded the apostles—those whom the apostles appointed to govern the church—exercised the same powers necessarily included in this commission, is it not clear, that this com-

mission was intended to extend to the successors of the apostles? What result could possibly be more plain and palpable than this? It ought to be remembered that the power belongs to the office, and not to the man, that the man must die, the office not — that all officers, as such, act only from mere delegated authority, and not of themselves — they are but agents and agency ceases with death.

From Heb. xiii, 7, 9, 17, it is plain that there were certain persons who had the rule or government over the Hebrews — that these persons were they that had spoken unto them the word of God; that is, those persons who had obeyed the command “Go teach” — and whose faith the Hebrews were commanded to “follow” that they might not be “carried about with divers and strange doctrines.” And again the Hebrews are told to “obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves.”

The apostle, in these extracts, certainly speaks of others besides the apostles, to whom the commission was first given.

The epistles of St. Paul to his two sons in the faith, Timothy and Titus are still more explicit. The passages have been already quoted.

Compare the powers exercised by Timothy and Titus with those given in the commission, and are they not the same? Were not they but carrying out the commission? From whom did they receive their powers, and by what means? God, the Father, constitutes the original fountain from which this stream of authority flows. Christ says to His apostles: “As my Father hath sent me, so send I you.” “He that receiveth whomsoever I sent, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me.” St. Paul received

his authority from Christ, and Timothy and Titus received their authority from St. Paul.

Certain positions of Mr. Breckenridge examined.

In reference to the ministerial authority of the Reformers, Bishop Hughes, in his controversy with Mr. Breckenridge, asked this question:

“Had the Reformers themselves, and if not, could they transmit to their successors any MINISTERIAL AUTHORITY?” To which Mr. B. replied: “that whatever authority your church possessed in this way, was imparted to them.” Bishop H. answered: “But our church recalled this authority, in their suspension and excommunication, and a new supply was necessary.” To this Mr. B. replied: “The proper answer to this question turns on the settlement of a previous question, to wit: had the church of Rome the right or the power, in this case, to withdraw their ministerial authority?” After giving some reasons Mr. B. takes this distinct ground.

“Then the principle is plain, that when a church deposes ministers of Christ for refusing to preach ruinous errors, and refusing to submit to oppressive usurpations, the deposing act is null and void. If a minister of Christ be deposed for refusing to sin, the deposition is null and void.” (Con. H. & B., 294, 443.)

This position of Mr. B. in its essence, and in its practical effect, denies all government in the church.

It is true Mr. B. puts in a condition. The act of the church is only null and void when made for reasons not allowed by the law of Christ. But of the sufficiency of these reasons, who is to judge? Is it the tribunal making the deposition, or the person deposed? The question must be determined by some one before the

conclusion can possibly be reached, that the deposition is null and void. The power and right to determine this important question must rest somewhere. If this power resides in the Church, it does not reside in the minister. It cannot equally reside in both. The right of ultimate decision must remain with only one of the two. Mr. B. gives this right and power, in his theory, not to the church, but to the person deposed.

What sort of theory is that which makes the decision of the highest tribunal in the government practically null and void upon the objection of the very person it tries and condemns? The Senate of the United States must try all impeachments. Suppose that body should try an impeachment of the President, find him guilty, and depose him from his office. And suppose his counsel should then take the novel and bold ground that the deposition was null and void, because contrary to law, and oppressive and tyrannical. In such case had not the counsel better return to the study of his profession? And when the Supreme Court of the United States makes a decision, who can declare that decision null and void, because given upon grounds alleged not legal and just? In the theory of our government that exalted tribunal is bound to decide according to law, and in this same theory, it always does so decide. That tribunal, in the contemplation of the Constitution, cannot err. If the Legislature thinks that an Act of Congress has been misconstrued, the act may be amended; and future cases will come under the new Act. If, in the opinion of the people, that Court misconstrues the Constitution, they can amend that instrument, and make it plainer. Suppose A and B, having a controversy, should go into a court of justice and say: "May it please the Court, we have a matter we wish to submit to the decision of

this Court, upon the condition that the decision shall suit us." The Court would promptly reply: "This Court cannot sit here to receive idle and insulting propositions."

In another place Mr. B. says:

"We believe in a visible Catholic (not Roman) church, to which appertain the ministry, the oracles, and ordinances of God, which is to continue to the end of the world; to which the Holy Spirit is promised as an abiding gift; against which the gates of hell shall not prevail; and which is at last to fill the world." (Con. H. & B., 61.)

Now I cannot put the two positions of the learned controversialists together. They seem to be in direct conflict. He holds a visible Catholic Church, which is to continue to the end of time, to which all the powers of government are given, and their exercise guaranteed by the Holy Spirit; and yet when this divinely-protected Church ordains a minister, and afterwards deposes him, that deposition may be null and void. Here is a church to which the Holy Spirit is promised as an "abiding gift," and against which the gates of hell "shall not prevail," and which at last is to "fill the world," that cannot even depose a minister without the liability of error — a Church thus divinely protected, that may still command her ministers "to preach ruinous errors" and "to sin." It would seem a most singular theory, that gives the church the abiding gift of the Holy Spirit, and guards her against the gates of hell at all times, and yet deserts her in the exercise of her highest functions — the very and only end of her creation. Surely, if the Holy Ghost should aid the church at all, this aid should be effective; and if effective, it must be in making her decisions, and in administering the law of this kingdom.

According to the theory of Mr. B. the church ordains a minister, and then, for causes judged sufficient by the ordaining power, deposes him. Yet this sentence of deposition, though made by the highest power in the church on earth, is not final, not conclusive, in the contemplation of his theory. The alleged decision has no force, unless the deposed submits. He may say it is null and void, and if he does say so, there is no power on earth to decide that question against him.

Is there any government in a Church, whose alleged decisions may be set aside by the party condemned, or by any other party? What sort of government is that, whose assumed decisions, in the contemplation of the theory of the government itself, are entitled to so little respect, that they can be disregarded by its own citizens or subjects? That which we call government is alone, it would seem, predicated upon the idea of supremacy — the right to make a final and binding decision in each particular case. Without this supreme and exclusive right placed somewhere in the governmental institution, there can be no government at all; and the organization is powerless, and must fail to accomplish the very end and purpose of its creation.

It may be that the learned divine is suitable to his own Church, and in strict accordance with her true character; but I am wholly unable to find any intimation in the New Testament that the Church of Christ was ever liable to these painful infirmities, and that her decisions might be null and void. I might as well expect to find such an intimation in the Constitution of my country regarding the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States; or in the British Constitution with reference to the decisions of parliament.

CHAPTER IV

THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

All laws intended for the government of men should provide some tribunal to determine what the law is.

The very idea of government supposes the organization of some competent tribunal to determine what the law means. Law being a rule prescribed by a superior to an inferior, and which the inferior is bound to obey, there must, of necessity, be a tribunal to declare and administer it. Man being competent to live in society, the object of political government is to regulate his conduct while in that state; and hence, to secure the peaceful union of a great number of individuals under one government, laws are made, and courts of justice instituted to explain them.

Among the great number of visionary schemes of government put forth by different writers, not one, to my knowledge, ever advanced so wild a theory, as to dispense with the judicial department, and make each individual governed the judge of the law in his own case.

The Constitution of the United States, and the constitutions of the several states, distribute the powers of government among three departments, namely: the Legislative, the Executive, and the Judicial. And the powers conferred upon each of these three departments, are all equally necessary to the continued existence of the

government. The absolute monarch either administers his own laws himself in person, or through judges acting for him.

This very idea of law presupposes this power to exist in the government. The very idea of union among a number of individuals, cannot be rationally entertained without it. There can be no continued union among men, without some competent means to preserve it. All positive laws intended for the government of men must be construed; and as they constitute a rule prescribed by a superior, they cannot, in the nature of the case, be construed in the last resort by the inferior, the very party to be governed.

Every government must furnish its own tribunal to administer its own laws. Every association of individuals must contain, in itself, some competent power to determine controversies. Every society of men must have the power lodged somewhere, to construe the law.

If it be indispensable for the just administration and success of the municipal law, that there should be a living, speaking judiciary, plainly accessible to all, whose duty it is to decide what the law is, and what it means, is it not also plain and palpable that there should be a like institution to determine the true construction of the Divine Law, so as to preserve unity and peace among those whom it governs, by keeping the construction of the law always the same, throughout every part of the association?

The mere fact that the Divine law was put forth by God in the form of a positive code, does not obviate the necessity for the continued existence of some tribunal to determine what the law means; for the plain reason that this law is intended, like the municipal code, to govern men, to unite men, is addressed to men, in

man's imperfect language, and must, therefore, be construed by someone; and there is thus the same, if not greater, necessity for uniformity of decision, for peace in the association, and of success in the system. The fact that this association was intended to embrace all Christians everywhere, in all ages, under one law, in one united government, is the strongest possible reason for the organization of one tribunal of the last resort.

We will suppose a legislator to put forth a code of laws, drawn up with all attainable accuracy, while we are forced to convey our ideas through so changeable and imperfect a medium as human language, and addressed to so frail a mind as that of man, and that he should have constituted no tribunal to determine what he meant, and should leave the people to whom this code was given for a great number of years, and should then return and call them up in judgment before him. What a strange medley of opinions he would find regarding the construction of his laws! He would say to them: "You have misconstrued and violated my laws, and I must punish you." They would answer: "That is a hard case. You did not treat us fairly. You gave us no authorized tribunal to decide for us, whose decisions from time to time would have settled difficulties, and upon which we could have relied for a correct interpretation of your law. Immediately after you left, difficulties of construction arose, and have been constantly arising ever since; and had there existed a tribunal, they could have been all settled from time to time, as often as they arose."

And to such unanswerable logic as this, what could the legislator justly reply? In vain would he say: "My law is plain, simple, and easily understood. It scarcely needs construction." They would reply: "Truly and

verily, the wisest men among us, while they declare it plain, differ most essentially as to what it means. They cannot all understand "plain" alike. And as for most of us, we are plain, illiterate men, and the law is not plain to us."

Is it not, therefore, reasonable that the Divine law, which comprehends the whole duty of man, should provide a tribunal to construe it, and thus to settle all disputes in the association respecting it? If such a tribunal be necessary in political government, is it not even more so in the Christian system?

It is true that there is a vast difference between temporal and eternal happiness; but this fact only renders it the more necessary to understand the Divine law, and proves the greater necessity of a competent tribunal to construe it in the last resort. Besides this, it is still happiness and happiness of the same being, that constitutes the ultimate end of both systems. Temporal and eternal happiness differ in degree and duration. Government is only a means and not an end. The immediate end proposed by both systems is the practical and continued union of men. It does not matter that the ultimate ends of these different systems are not the same in degree and duration, while they are the same in substance. If the means used are substantially the same, these means must be subject to the same general laws. If our Lord resorted to a visible association of men to accomplish the union of His followers, and the united, and, therefore, successful spread of His system, this association of men must, in itself, possess all the essential requisites that enter into, and constitute all associations, and render them practically efficient to accomplish the purpose intended.

Such tribunal must possess infallibility, either actual or judicial, according to the nature of the system.

As the municipal law only assumes to control our outward acts, and does not reach our mere belief and intentions, a man may believe all the falsehood, and intend all the wrong he pleases, and still commit no offence against that code. But it is not so in the perfect law of God, which controls us in belief, intention, and act.

If union among men be necessary for any given purpose, the preservation of that union becomes equally important, so long as that purpose continues to exist; and this union cannot be accomplished unless some fair and adequate means be provided for this end. It may be laid down as an unerring principle, that union, in any association of men, cannot continue to exist without peace; and that peace cannot be preserved without competent means to end disputes. The happiness that men expect to obtain by entering into society cannot be enjoyed without peace, to secure which a tribunal must be established to decide controversies.

If we go into the appropriate apartment of the Capitol, at Washington City, we shall find in session an august tribunal, before whose bar the most learned and gifted men of the nation display their reasoning eloquence. This great court is composed of a very few judges, whose equals, if not superiors, in mental and moral qualifications, are found among the great lawyers who stand before it, and also among the learned judges who sit in the state courts; and yet its decisions are conclusive upon all. Its adjudications not only control the course of decision of the inferior Federal tribunals, but are binding upon the state courts, and are competent

to annul the acts of the President and of Congress.

Before this lofty tribunal, honor, titles, wealth, and fame are powerless; and nothing but pure legal justice is presumed, in contemplation of law, to govern and guide its conclusions. No armed bands of soldiers throng its halls to protect it and enforce its decisions, and yet this court settles questions involving the dearest rights of millions of civilized and enlightened men. This venerable tribunal is the Supreme Court of the United States, and upon it the Constitution of our country has conferred judicial infallibility.

The framers of that great instrument, the Constitution of the United States, were men of preëminent ability, and they gave to it all the certainty attainable by them. And yet they knew it would be idle to make a constitution and laws under it, and not organize courts for their construction. They also knew that it was useless to have courts, unless their decisions could be made final; and for this purpose they provided for the organization of ONE SUPREME COURT, with appellate jurisdiction, and gave Congress the power to provide for the creation of inferior tribunals only.

In the contemplation of our Constitution, the Supreme Court cannot err. There is no legal power anywhere to question its decisions. All must submit. It is not in the power of the President, the Congress, and all the State courts combined, to set aside one of its decisions. And yet it is generally conceded that the court has actually rendered incorrect decisions. That court sustained the constitutionality of the Alien and Sedition laws, which decision is now almost universally held to have been erroneous. But admitting that the Court has not yet actually erred, it must be conceded that it may. The framers of the Constitution were compelled

to bestow upon this tribunal judicial infallibility, because they could bestow no other, and some sort of infallibility was indispensable. It is a much less evil to submit to an occasional erroneous decision than to have no decision at all, so necessary is peace.

Actual infallibility must be found in the Christian association.

If there be any union required by the law of Christ, and any tribunal to decide disputes, is it not clear that such tribunal must, of necessity, possess infallibility of some sort, or else the institution be totally defective and insufficient? If there be no infallibility in the association of men, formed in accordance with the law of God, then it is more defective than mere political governments, and cannot possibly possess any living, perpetuating principle. For what purpose does a tribunal decide, if its decision is not final, or cannot be made final, by an appeal to a higher court? What is the object of a decision? To end disputes; and if not final, it does not end the controversy, and is simply idle.

And if God did establish such tribunal, could He, in reason, give it mere judicial infallibility? Would He make it as defective as mere human institutions, when He possessed the wisdom and the power to make it perfect? Does God do His work in that way? It is true, that if God implicitly required all the members to submit to the decisions of such a tribunal, the association might continue, but it would not continue the same pure association. The tribunal being actually fallible, and only judicially infallible, must actually err, sooner or later, and God would thus be requiring implicit submission to erroneous decisions. The idea of a tribunal only clothed with mere judicial infallibility, deciding

finally upon a law dictated by actual infallibility, would seem to be clearly erroneous. And the idea of a tribunal of the last resort deciding upon a law given in human language, and such decision not being final, would seem equally inadmissible.

Had the framers of political constitutions possessed the power, they no doubt would have bestowed upon their judiciary actual, instead of mere judicial infallibility. But as God possessed the power and the wisdom, and, therefore, did make a perfect law, would He not necessarily create a tribunal competent to construe such a law?

Our Creator made man and placed him upon the earth. He bestowed upon him the faculty of reason, and its necessary incident, free will. He gave to this free agent a direct and positive law, prescribed by Himself; the immediate end of this law was to bring all men of good will into one association of pure faith and virtue, to be governed by this one law; that this law was given in human language, and must be construed. God does not Himself visibly preside, in this collective body of men, for the purpose of deciding controversies, but for this end He organized a tribunal in this association, and delegated to it power and authority to decide, with infallible certainty.

Is this not a rational theory, beautiful to the judgment, and consolatory to the heart? It would seem to possess every element of a perfect system, harmonious, practical, and just, in every feature.

The judicial power of the Church must extend to every violation of the law.

The Constitution of the United States organized a government, possessing certain defined powers, and in-

tended to accomplish certain great national objects. The instrument, in the theory of the system, is the fundamental and unchangeable law, until amended in pursuance of its own provisions. As the legislative power, from the nature of mere human systems, and the limited capacity of men, and the constantly varying circumstances of the people governed, could not all be beneficially exercised at the beginning, it is left, in part, in the government, to be exercised, from time to time, within the limits prescribed by the Constitution. The powers of this government are divided between three departments, the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary, which, together, embrace all the powers communicated to the system. In reference to the extent of the judicial power, Chancellor Kent has said:

“The judicial power in every government must be co-extensive with the power of legislation. Were there no power to interpret, pronounce, and execute the law, the government would either perish through its own imbecility, as was the case with the old Confederation, or other powers must be assumed by the legislative body, to the destruction of liberty.” (Kent I, 296.)

While the legislative power in the Christian government could be exercised in advance, in reference to all the material and permanent features of the system, the executive and judicial powers, from their nature, could not, as already stated, but must continue in the Church, and be exercised as often as occasion may require. It would, therefore, seem plain that the governing power left by Christ in the Church must have jurisdiction over all cases embraced within the law governing the institution. In other words, if Christ gave to His own institution a law for its government, “commanding what is right, and prohibiting what is wrong”; then, whatever

governing power, if any, He placed in the church, must embrace whatever is commanded or prohibited by the law. The code is mainly intended for practical application in this world, and is, therefore, given for a certain end. There are two kinds of obedience required by the system, instead of one only, and as they are both vitally important to reach the end aimed at by the law-maker, whatever power was left in the church to construe and apply the law, must extend to both these particulars, or the institution must "perish through its own imbecility."

Every violation of the law is an offence, more or less aggravated, according to its nature, as defined by the law itself. Heresy, which may be defined as the wilful disbelief of an essential article of faith, or the wilful belief of an essential false doctrine, by one who professes to be a Christian, is, therefore, an offence against the system, for the reason that the law requires correct faith, and prohibits a false one. Thus Christ says: "He that believeth not shall be damned;" and St. Paul speaks of heresies as offences against the law of Christ, (I Cor. xi, 19); and in the fifth chapter of his Epistle to the Galatians.

The language of the apostle is clear and explicit, that those offences exclude the guilty party from the Kingdom of heaven; and heresy is classed with idolatry, murder, and the other offences mentioned. And if the judicial power of the Church extends to any one of these offences, it must extend to all.

The necessity for such a tribunal shown from the true character of Scripture.

In the mind of Christ there was no confusion, but all was unclouded, intellectual day. When He came to convey His will through so imperfect and changeable a

medium as human language, addressed to so frail a mind as that of man, it would seem that certainty could not possibly be attained, under the circumstances, without an infallible interpreter. His law is the most extensive and wonderful code ever given to man, embracing not only plain and simple truths, but truths of the most sublime and abstruse character; revelations of awful import; a code regulating in the most perfect manner, all our duties in all the multiplied relations of life, and our whole duty to God.

As to the imperfect and changeable character of language, all intelligent writers are agreed. Its imperfections are most fully understood by statesmen, jurists, and lawyers. Before courts of justice, where the rules of investigation are the most rigid, and searching, the true character of this medium is best understood.

“Such is the intrinsic imperfection of all human language, that it frequently becomes impossible, from the mere words alone of any writing, to ascertain the meaning of the parties.” (Wheaton’s Law of Nations, 3d Ed., p. 77, 334.)

“But such is the imperfection of human language, and the want of technical skill in the makers of the law, that statutes often give occasion to the most perplexing doubts and discussions, arising from the ambiguity that attends them.” (1 Kent, 461.)

“The fluctuating use of words, which prevails in every language, gives rise to frequent changes in their meaning.” (Ernesti, as quoted by Mr. Rice in C. & R’s. debate, 201.)

The learned Protestant Bishop Walton very justly says:

“The word of God does not consist in mere letters, whether written or printed, but in the sense of it; which

no one can better interpret than the true church, to which Christ has committed this sacred pledge." (Cited Milner's End of Con., p. 56.)

"Let us be persuaded," says St. Augustine, "that the Gospel consists not in the words, but in the sense." (Cited id., 56.)

Mr. Justice Johnson, in his able opinion in *Martin v. Hunter's Lessee*, (1 Wheaton, 376,) said that "language is essentially defective in precision."

In the nature of a supernatural system, revealing truths that we never could reach by the mightiest efforts of unaided reason, and prescribing a perfect morality far above all our natural conceptions of justice, and embracing so many interests, both temporal and eternal, we must expect to find many truths and duties of a plain and simple character, and some most difficult. If the system be extensive, and assume to regulate many interests, it must, of necessity, be more complex, or otherwise it must be incomplete. A system of law requisite to governing a wandering race of men may be very simple, for the reason that they have few rights to protect. They have no merchants, and they need no bills of exchange; they have no lands, and need no land law; they have little or no property, and need no law to protect that; they have no mechanics, and need no law of lien; they have no steamboats, no railroads, no telegraphic lines, and need no laws to regulate that which they have not. But the moment a people take to a new branch of business, they need, and must have, a law to protect it. And as their employments increase, their code of laws must also be extended, and in proportion as the code is extended to new objects, so is its complexity increased. Each new subject gives rise to a new law, and each new law gives rise to some difficult questions. The Legisla-

ture is therefore compelled, either to leave interests unprotected, or to enact laws from time to time, as these interests increase.

When we examine the written word of God, we find many things in it easy to be understood, and some things hard to be understood. The narrative portions, as a general thing, are plain and simple, but the doctrinal portions are more difficult. Let any calm, sincere, and clear-headed reader examine the New Testament carefully, without any preconceived system of faith in his mind, and he must find some things hard to be understood. He will find this fact apparent upon the face of the record.

That the great and overwhelming majority of men, in every age and country, who rely alone upon their individual judgment belong either to the call of unlearned or unstable, would seem to need no proof. If it did, it is conclusively shown among Protestants, from the fact of so many different parties existing among them, who can never understand the plain Bible alike. Whatever may be their worldly and literary knowledge, they are not learned and stable in the sense of the apostle; otherwise there could not exist the five hundred different sects in Protestant Christendom. And the more earnestly and emphatically they contend that the Scriptures are plain and easily understood in all important points, the more powerfully do they condemn themselves for those divisions so utterly inconsistent with right reason and the united and consistent law of Christ.

Causes of the obscurity of the Scriptures.

There exists a difficulty in the construction and application of the Scriptures, that must, in the nature of things, exist in every code of law, however extensive or

limited it may be. And this difficulty is greater in the Christian than in the civil code, for the reason that the former embraces a much larger sphere of duties, contemplates ends much more important and enduring, and relates to objects more sublime, varied, and difficult. This difficulty cannot be avoided by any possible accuracy of language or scientific arrangement, although it may be modified by such accuracy to some extent.

The great leading principles of the law of the land are expressed in language as accurate and certain, as centuries of discussion and examination by the most acute and powerful minds in the world, could possibly enable them to select; and these principles are as familiar to our courts as time, experience, and study could make them. And yet, it is a well-known fact, that new cases of the most perplexing character arise in our courts every day, that are ultimately determined by the legitimate application and extension of these old and familiar principles. And this difficulty arises, not from the want of certainty in the statement of a principle; not from any avoidable ambiguity in the language; and not from ignorance of the principle itself; but it arises from the uncertainty whether a given state of case comes within the principle.

For instance, the Constitution of the United States was framed by men of the most eminent ability, and of the most unquestioned integrity. They were great jurists, lawyers, and statesmen, and they gave to the instrument all the certainty and accuracy attainable by them. Yet, immediately after the adoption of the Constitution, a very able work, the *Federalist*, was written by Mr. Madison and others, for the purpose of rendering its provisions more clear. Many thousands of pages have been written by the most eminent men of the nation, to explain the meaning of a short instrument of

nine or ten pages ; Mr. Justice Story's commentaries upon the Constitution, fill thirteen hundred pages. Discussions in Congress, in the Supreme Court of the United States, and in the Courts of every State in the Union, and by the greatest men of the country, have still left many questions in painful doubt and uncertainty. This diversity of views has not arisen so much from any avoidable ambiguity in the language of the Constitution, as from the difficulty of applying its provisions to the new and complicated cases that have arisen from time to time.

Among the many provisions of that instrument, which is stated in language as definite and certain as any that could, perhaps, be selected, and yet has given rise to many decisions and conflicting opinions among legislators and jurists, is that part of the tenth section of the first article, which provides that "no state shall pass any law impairing the obligation of contracts." The word, contract, as a legal term, is very accurate, and well understood. And yet the Supreme Court of the United States has been compelled to decide many acts of the Legislatures of different States unconstitutional under this prohibition. New questions arise under this provision and the acts of the State Legislatures continually, and will, most probably, for many years to come. The varied cases arising under this single provision of the Constitution, which apparently seems so clear and simple, go to show, what every jurist and lawyer knows, that one of the chief difficulties in the constructions and administration of law often arises in the application of a familiar principle.

If we take up the New Testament, and exclude the narrative portions of the Gospels and the Acts, and the local and argumentative portions of the Epistles, and all repetitions in each, we shall find a very small space oc-

cupied by the provisions of the written law of Christianity. Yet this code embraces much more than any human system, and so concisely are its leading principles stated, that they occupy a very small space.

If, then, the Christian code embraces a more extensive range of duties than any municipal code; and, like all other codes, only lays down principles, and does not attempt to decide each case in detail, it would seem reasonable that we must expect as great, if not greater difficulties to arise in the application of its great principles, than those we meet in the practical application of the laws of civil government. We would naturally anticipate that the pride, the ingenuity, the ambition of men, as well as the honest mistakes of a zeal not according to knowledge, would bring up many questions of the most perplexing character, giving rise to a great variety of views, in the absence of some common and competent tribunal to decide all questions for all parties.

If we take up, and carefully examine, the New Testament narrative concise as it is, we shall find, that even at that early day, difficulties arose at every step, in the application of its principles. While the twelve were with Christ, we find our Lord often upbraiding them for their want of faith, and their slowness to understand. Repeated explanations were given by our Lord to His apostles, who heard all His instructions, and witnessed all His miracles. They did not even understand that He was to rise again from the dead, until after the happening of that event. We are surprised to find this proneness to unbelief, and this dulness of apprehension, in the chosen apostles, after all they had seen and heard; and we are very naturally inclined to pay ourselves the happy compliment to think that we should have been, under such wonderful circumstances, much more docile, confiding, and apt

to understand. But in coming to this conclusion we show a very imperfect appreciation of the difficulties that must attend the individual investigation of a system so mysterious and sublime; and we exhibit a very inaccurate conception of the weakness and frailty of the human mind. For, after ages of experience, and after the greatest critics have written more upon the construction of this small, but wonderful volume, than upon any other one subject in the world, the same difficulties in the way of individual examination still exist; and not only so, but they increase with time; so that those who rely upon their individual construction, are divided into more numerous parties than ever.

Examples, may be found in the New Testament, to show that in the days of the apostles numerous difficult judicial questions arose at intervals, in the application of conceded principles to particular cases, requiring the decision of the governing power of the church to settle them. And if we follow down the stream of events, after the days of the apostles, we shall find new questions often arising, from age to age, and requiring the application of the law to the facts and circumstances of each new case, as it arose.

That the right of revolution cannot exist in the members of the church.

If it be conceded or proved, that whatever governing power was left by Christ to be exercised by the officers of the church, must embrace whatever was commanded or prohibited by the law of this institution — that certainty as to the true construction of the code is indispensable — that the Scriptures contain obscurities peculiar to them, as well as those common to every code of law — and that those things hard to be understood must still be

understood, at least sufficiently to believe them — does it not follow most logically that there is the same necessity and propriety for the judicial power of the church to be guided by the same infallible Spirit that guided and controlled the legislative power necessary to complete the code? In other words, the legislative and judicial powers of government should be guided alike by the same infallible Power.

The lawful and valid acts of a republican form of government are the acts of the people, in their united capacity. Hence an individual citizen or subject cannot lawfully resist the execution of a law in his individual capacity. Nor can any number of individuals, separately or combined, do this lawfully, so long as the system shall last. The same power that created the government may amend it, either in the mode pointed out by the fundamental law, or they may do so by exercising the right of revolution in extreme cases.

This right of revolution does not and cannot exist in the Church. Christ was the sole and only founder. It is compared to a Kingdom, not to a republic. The right to institute this government was not, therefore, derived from the consent of the governed. The consent of the governed can properly be required only when the parties governed constitute the sovereign power. In other words, when partners institute a government for themselves, the consent of a majority is requisite. But not so when a government is instituted by a superior being for an inferior. Whatever laws Christ gave His Church, and whatever powers of government He bestowed upon Her, must remain unchanged, unless changed in pursuance of some provision of the law itself. And if no such provision exists, then such change cannot be made.

The idea of a reserved right in the party governed to

decide whether the officer placed over him by Christ and acting solely as the agent of Christ, construes the law correctly or not, is utterly incompatible with every principle of government. For even in political government, the right of the citizen or subject thus to decide in his capacity as the party governed, does not exist.

I remember a striking illustration of the principle, that an insult to the agent or officer, is an insult to the power he represents. I was a practicing lawyer at the time, and the judge who presided was an upright officer, and has since been a member of the United States Senate. An ordinary man had taken a personal dislike to the judge for some imaginary cause, (as dislikes and enmities among men mostly arise from prejudice and imagination,) and therefore he committed a contempt of Court by some insolent conduct, intended as an insult to the judge personally. He was arrested and brought before the Court. When he first appeared before his Honor, he seemed to be quite stubborn and malicious. The Judge addressed him briefly, but in very noble language. "You have," said he in substance, to the culprit, "insulted this Court, and not the judge personally. I act not for myself. I am but an agent of the State. For myself individually I ask no protection from insult, but I do ask it for my country — for the sovereign State, whose servant I am. You have not insulted me, but you have insulted your fellow-citizens — the people of the whole State, of which you are also a citizen. You have insulted your country, and it is made my duty, by the laws of the State, to protect her dignity and her honor from insult and contempt. But as you have acted under a mistake as to the object of your contempt, the Court will only impose upon you a small fine."

I never saw a man so mortified as the poor culprit.

For the first time in his life he understood the distinction between an individual and an officer.

The duty of the judicial power.

It is the duty of the judicial power, in every government, to construe the law, and apply it to particular cases. The legislative power makes the law, and the judicial power only construes and applies it. The difficulties are about as great in the exercise of one power as in that of the other, and it requires about equal capacity to attain perfection in each.

That a lawmaker, possessing the same capacity, could use language as correctly as the judge who decides the law, is clear, and must be conceded. But the two are placed in very different positions. There is a wonderful difference between making a law in advance, and afterwards construing it.

All laws are made in advance, and before any case can arise under them. They are intended to govern future, not past actions. Hence it follows that law can only lay down principles, but cannot apply them to particular cases, that arise after the law is made. Law must, in the very nature of the fact, deal in principles, embracing a variety of cases under each principle. Law never speaks but once. It never changes its language, although the meaning of its terms may be changed by usage. Under any and all sorts of perversion, it says no more. It adopts no new illustrations, suited to the particular question raised, and the capacity of the party. It decides no particular case. All it can do is to lay down principles. It cannot enumerate, in advance, the incidents that will make up each particular case that may afterwards arise, and pronounce the proper judgment.

But it is not so with a living, speaking judiciary. **A**

particular case comes up before it. The question is, does this particular case come within a certain principle? The tribunal says yea or nay. It does not leave the party to construe the law, and by comparison and rational deduction to arrive at the intent of the lawmaker, but says to him plainly, "in this case you are wrong," or "you are right," as the case may be. The Court, as each new case arises, makes a construction of the law in reference only to that case. As all cases consist of a certain number of incidents, when one case is decided in a certain way, all cases afterwards arising, having the same incidents, come under the principle settled. If the decision is misunderstood, the Court is always in being, ready, able, and willing to correct any misconstruction of its opinion.

It is true, that while all must admit that this decision is legally right and judicially infallible, many will doubtless think that the decision ought to have been different. But suppose that Court had possessed actual, instead of mere judicial infallibility, what perfect unanimity would have resulted from such a decision — not only unanimity of submission, but also of relief. In such case no man, admitting the existence of this actual infallibility, would ever question the correctness of the decision, in argument or theory. All would have been perfect unanimity in the two elements of act and belief.

Many of the disputed passages of Scripture are only subject to one of two opposite constructions, one of which being condemned, the other must stand. "This is my body" admits of but one of two opposite constructions. How easy would it be for an authorized tribunal to settle the construction! A tribunal confines its decision to a single point at a time, and adapts its language to the precise state of particular misconstruction. Though it is the general character of language, as a medium of

thought, to be deficient in precision, there are still certain forms of expression too plain to be misunderstood. The tribunal could take the very words of the proposition and say, "this is wrong." Suppose we had the Council of Jerusalem still with us, could not that tribunal settle the questions now in dispute as it did the one before it?

The decisive advantages of a living, speaking tribunal are, 1. It decides after the difficulty has arisen, and adapts its language to the precise state of the particular case. 2. It can repeat its explanations until it must be understood. 3. It is always prepared to meet every new difficulty, as occasion may demand.

The judicial power was exercised by the apostolic church.

There are only, as I conceive, three possible ways in which Christ could produce certainty in the construction of His law:

1. By an inspired personal revelation of the true construction to each individual, as often as occasion should arise.

2. By the institution of an infallible tribunal.

3. By enumerating in advance all the exact incidents of each particular case, and pronouncing the proper judgment as to each.

By far the most simple, logical, and consistent method, is the second one. The first is liable to many serious objections. It does away with the necessity of teachers, and of all government in the church; and besides, the inspired persons might know themselves that they were right, but others would have no test by which they could determine between the true and the pretending believer. Each individual asserting, as a matter of fact, resting in his own individual knowledge, and not, therefore, to be

disputed, that his interpretation was inspired, the confusion produced would be endless. The third effort would have required an amount of labor at the beginning too extensive and difficult.

The powers of government given to the church, were given to the visible church, as we already proved. When Christ tells us to hear the church, He certainly means the visible Church. And when He speaks of one fold, He must refer to the visible Church. And when we are told that the "Lord added daily to the Church such as should be saved," we are informed that they were added to the visible Church. And the church in which Timothy was to behave himself, was the visible Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth." The duties inculcated upon Timothy and Titus were to be discharged in the visible Church. The Council of Jerusalem was held in the visible Church, and they issued visible decrees.

Whatever powers of government Christ bestowed upon the Church, were to be exercised by the visible Church, and this exercise was guided by the Holy Ghost in the days of the apostles. If those powers and this guidance were intended to be temporary, and to last only for the first few years of her existence, and then forever to cease, of course the exact limits of their duration are plainly marked; otherwise it would be very difficult to determine, from the Scripture, the period when they did cease, or whether they were to cease at all. But no such limits are set, and we find the promises accompanied with expressions that refer to all coming time. We cannot, therefore, without the utmost violence to the language, and the whole drift and spirit of the system, decide them to have been temporary in their character.

In the eighteenth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew our Lord said:

“And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican.” (verse 17.)

When Christ tells us to hear the church, He speaks of but one Church — the Church He instituted. He says “THE CHURCH” in the singular. He does not refer to “the church” as existing in this or that age, in this or that country, but He refers to the corporate institution as existing in all after ages. The Church is viewed as an artificial person or corporation, that never dies, and that can speak through her proper organs. He says “hear the Church.” It is the Church that speaks, not the individual members in their own right.

But not only does Christ say that the Church can speak, but He commands us, without any reservation, to “hear the church.” There is no exception made. The command is general and imperative. Would He command us to hear, without any reservation or exception, a mere fallible tribunal? In such case we should be compelled to “hear the church,” whether she spoke the truth or not.

Again our Lord says explicitly: “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.”

The Church is here viewed in the light of a visible structure, founded upon a rock, and that is the reason why St. Paul afterwards calls this Church the “house of God.” Now the phrase “my church” — the phrase “the church” — and the phrase “house of God,” unquestionably refer to one and the same thing precisely; namely: the visible Church.

When, therefore, Christ tells us that the gates of hell shall not prevail against this church, His promise regards the entire Church of all ages, in the same way that the command to hear the church does. The promise is as

general and unlimited as the command; and they both must stand or fall together. They both regard the Church as existing through all coming time.

Christ establishes the Church as a decider of controversies arising under the Christian law; and then says, in another place, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. This promise has relation to the command to hear the Church. As the Church possessed the power to decide controversies, this must be one end of its institution. The power was given for a great and beneficial purpose. If she failed to exercise this power correctly, she would so far fail to attain the end of her creation. Nothing would seem more consonant with reason and Scripture than this: that teaching the truth was the leading end to be accomplished by the visible church, and that the power and duty of teaching must include the right and duty to determine what shall be taught, and what is contrary thereto. And if the church failed in this main purpose of her creation, that then the gates of hell would prevail against her.

It would seem also clear that the temporary errors of particular teachers, would not subvert the entire Church, any more than the errors of inferior courts would subvert civil government. They are spots upon the sun, and spots only. When the entire governing power of the Church is subverted (wherever that power is held to be placed), then the gates of hell would surely prevail against her. Such a result would be in plain violation of the promises of Christ.

If we say that the Church has ceased, or will cease, to exist at any period before her prescribed course has been run, then we must concede the failure of the promises of Christ; not only because such a failure would be in direct conflict with His clear and most explicit promises —

“lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” — “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” — but because the continued existence of the Church is necessary to accomplish the great and beneficent purposes of His mission. The Church having been constituted by Him, His teaching agent, it was but just to all ages, that this same teaching authority should be always in existence, and always visible. If we regard the Church as a visible corporation (and we can form no conception of an invisible corporation composed of visible men) then her continued existence must follow, or she must die to exist no more on earth. The promises of Christ to her were unconditional, and not conditional, as were His promises to individuals regarding matters of their own. Her unfailing existence and continued purity, as a teaching agent, are absolutely necessary to accomplish the great ends contemplated in her creation. If we once concede that the Church can fail, then we concede that Christ was fallible, weak, and impotent, and only created an institution like himself.

What did our Lord mean by the expression, “I am with you — abide with you?” These expressions which mean the same thing, are very often used by Christ, and in every case the meaning is invariably the same; namely: “I am with you to aid you with my power.” It always means that the persons to whom the promise was given were to be guided and protected by him. The presence of the Holy Ghost did the same. Of course our Lord could not be with them for a mere idle purpose, and He could only be with them to enable them to accomplish the end proposed. Therefore, the effect of this promise is always limited to the objects for which it was given. When Christ constituted a college of teachers, and promised to be with them to the end of the world, He only

promised to be with them in the office He created, and for the purposes of the office.

The words of St. Paul are very emphatic and clear. Speaking of the visible Church, he calls it "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Observe the certainty and force of the expressions — the Church — the pillar and (the) ground of the truth — the house — the living God. There was one God, one house, one church, one pillar, one ground, and one system of truth referred to, and only one.

The apostle had ample reason for saying so. He commanded his brethren to "obey, submit to, and follow the faith of them that had the rule over them," and had himself been at the Council of Jerusalem, and had witnessed that tribunal guided by the Holy Spirit to a final decision. He might well call the Church the pillar and ground of the truth, and as the pillar, but also as the ground of the truth, how could such an institution be anything but infallible? How could a church teaching essential error be the pillar and ground of the truth? In such case she would be the pillar and ground of error, and not of truth.

If we consider the necessity, and the end and object of the organization of the visible Church — the perfect character and unlimited power of its founder — the nature of all governments of law over associated bodies of men — the inherent defects of all language — the obscurities peculiar to the Scriptures — the difficulty even in the application of well-understood principles to particular cases — the obstacles to be overcome by this great institution, arising from the extent of its empire, the long period of its existence, the variety of races, manners, habits, and national prejudices — the perfection of faith and practice required — and then see what Christ and

His apostles did do — how our Lord first taught His disciples, and then appointed them as teachers, and they in turn did the same thing, and commanded those they appointed to appoint others — how the teachers had the rule over the apostolic Church, and their faith was to be followed, and they to be obeyed — how our Lord commanded His followers to hear the Church, and promised to found it upon a rock, and protect it against the gates of hell, and to be with His teachers to the end of the world, and to send them the Holy Ghost to abide with them forever — and then see how Christ carried out these promises by guiding the decision of the Council of Jerusalem to infallible certainty, making the Church the pillar and ground of the truth in fact — and when, to use the touching language of the noble St. Paul, we “think on these things,” and sincerely, and without prejudice, calmly put them all together, and fully appreciate the combined force of all, then it is that the conclusion becomes irresistible, that Christ was the Divine founder of a perfect system — that the permanent code was made perfect at the beginning, not only because He possessed the power and the wisdom to make it so, but that all His subjects in all after ages, might be alike governed by the same law — that as the necessary judicial power to secure this permanent end, could not be exercised in advance, He confided it to His agents, whom He qualifies and guides from age to age, with the same Infallible Spirit that dictated the code itself.

It would also seem evident from the very nature of mere delegated authority, that this protection from error only extended to the apostles and their successors in their official capacity, leaving them, in their personal capacity, as other individual members of the Church. As agents

and officers of Christ, they were guided by the Holy Spirit, because their acts, in that capacity, were HIS ACTS. When they assumed to act for Him, He did not permit them to err in His name. If they had the power to err as His agents, then we could not know that the facts stated by them as His chosen and inspired witnesses, were infallibly true. Christ then guaranteed their official not their personal, conduct.

Objections considered.

In this connection it will be necessary to examine certain texts and reasons, which are relied on by Protestant writers to show, that even in the days of the apostles, the right of private interpretation existed in each member independent of the church, and not in subordination to it. If such right existed in that day, as a matter of course it existed ever after. If, on the contrary, it did not exist then, it never existed afterwards.

It is difficult upon principles of sound reasoning, to understand how this right could exist in the individual members of the church, when so many persons were forced by her decisions to change their construction, and others were expelled because they refused to do so. It is difficult, I apprehend, to reconcile the strong and clear commands of Christ, of St. Paul, and of the Council of Jerusalem, with the alleged right of private interpretation in the last resort.

The following passages are most usually relied upon :

1. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." (John v, 39.)
2. "These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness

of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." (Acts xvii, 11.)

3. "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." (I John iv, 1, 7.)

4. "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand." (II Cor. i, 24.)

5. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given to him." (James i, 5.)

6. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," etc. (II Tim. iii, 14, 16.)

The ground taken by Protestants is, substantially, that these texts establish two points:

1. That individuals were allowed to read the Scriptures, and were commended for so doing.

2. That as they were permitted to read, of course they were permitted to construe.

Conceding, for the sake of the argument only, that the teaching authority of the Church, in the days of the apostles, permitted the lay members to read or hear the Scriptures as one means of instruction, then the essence of the objection is, that the right of the church to construe the law in the last resort, is incompatible with the reading of the Scriptures by individuals. But is this true? The true explanation is this: that the individual construes in the first instance, and the church in the last resort. These rights are perfectly compatible with each other, and exist in every system of law. For the very reason that the individual, under every system of government, is allowed to construe in the first instance, he is not allowed to construe in the last resort.

The object of the just lawgiver is to place in the mind

of the party governed a perfect knowledge of his will. The written or traditional code — the words of the legislator — are mere evidence of his will, which is the higher and ultimate object sought by the party under government. Suppose that for this purpose the lawmaker places in the hands of each one of his subjects, the volume containing his law, and at the same time they are informed by him and by the book itself that there is a tribunal to construe in the last resort; is there anything illogical or contradictory in this? If so, then all the great legislators and jurists of every civilized country in the world have long acted upon a very illogical system.

The great statesmen and jurists of the United States, from the days of Washington to the present time, have all, with one accord, urged every citizen to read and study the Constitution of his country; and yet the Constitution itself informs everyone that the right of ultimate construction rests with the Supreme Court of the United States. The Senate of the United States has had purchased, for gratuitous disposition, some thirty-five thousand copies of Hickey's corrected copy of that instrument. Now suppose an individual to whom Mr. Webster had sent a copy, to have addressed him thus: "Sir, you have sent for my perusal and study a number of Hickey's Constitution; and yet, I find, upon examination of the instrument, that there is a judiciary to construe the Constitution and other laws in the last resort. Therefore, for what purpose have I read it? since my construction is but subordinate, and not final. Is it not absurd to recommend a man to read and study an instrument which, at last, will be construed by another tribunal, without any regard to what he has done?"

We can well imagine the surprise with which the great

constitutional expounder would have received this plausible, but wholly erroneous objection.

The Constitution and laws of our country contain many plain provisions, easily understood, and some hard to be understood, as St. Peter says of St. Paul's Epistles. The reader, therefore, can learn a portion, and this will be profitable to him. He can learn those plain provisions that teach him he is under government; and that while he has the privilege to read and construe the law in the first instance, the ultimate right of construction is vested in the Judiciary.

Now if there be no incompatibility in permitting each citizen to study the Constitution himself, while his construction is but subordinate and not final, how then does it follow that the ancient Christians could not read the Scriptures unless they, and each of them, were allowed to decide the construction in the last resort? The passages quoted, nowhere lay down any such principle. They establish the proposition that individuals were commended for reading the Scriptures. But cannot this be true, and yet perfectly consistent with the ultimate right of the church to construe in the last resort? The individual could be profited and edified, and yet hear and obey the church. They but exercised a subordinate privilege, that exists in all governments. These texts do not annul the clear and specific provisions of the code, requiring us to hear the church, and to obey, submit to, and follow the faith of them who have the rule over us.

The practice of the apostles and elders of the church in their day, was perfectly consistent with this view. They intended to make the system consistent with itself. They did not intend to give commands that were not to be obeyed. When we look into St. Paul's Epistles we find

that a large portion of them is taken up in giving his construction of the code, and his reasons and proofs to sustain it; and hence he refers often to the Old Scriptures. In these Epistles we find him mentioning certain particular errors in different churches, and distinctly condemning them. The brethren to whom he wrote had misconstrued the law, and we find St. Paul overruling their construction. The Corinthian brethren had erred in this way. So, the Jewish teachers who insisted upon the necessity of circumcision for the Gentile converts, had misconstrued the law, and the Council of Jerusalem overruled their construction, just as a higher Court would the construction of an inferior tribunal.

Christ had appealed to His miracles as proofs of His character; but the Pharisees relied upon the Scriptures, and our Lord referred them also to those Scriptures, at the same time telling them, in substance, that they misconstrued them, and that if they would search and construe properly, they would find that these Scriptures testified of Him. But in thus referring to the Old Testament, did our Lord intend to say to the Jews that His Miracles were no proofs of His mission? He only referred to additional, but not contradictory proofs. And when the noble Bereans searched the Old Scriptures, they did not neglect the proofs that Paul and Silas gave them, independent of these Scriptures. So, when St. Paul said the Scriptures were profitable, he did not mean to say: "You must not obey, submit to, or follow the faith of them that have the rule over you." Nor did he intend, when he commanded Timothy and Titus to command, teach, exhort, and rebuke with all authority, to ordain and try elders, and reject heretics, that these persons thus rebuked and rejected, should construe the law for themselves, independent of Timothy and Titus.

The quotation from St. John, where he tells his brethren to "try the spirits whether they are of God," is far from being against the view I have taken, but would seem to support it.

The apostle gives his brethren two rules, by which they were to test the spirits, to know whether they were false teachers or not, for many false prophets had gone out into the world.

1. Every spirit that confessed that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh was of God, and every one that denied it was not of God.

2. "He that knoweth God heareth us: he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

The spirit that confessed Christ was a true spirit; and the test, as to whether a particular individual confessed Christ, was the fact whether he heard the apostles or not. This was saying, in substance, that the false prophets, were they who refused to hear the church; for when they refused to hear the proper organs of the church, they refused to hear the Church itself. This was a very simple test by which to detect these false prophets. The apostle first tells his brethren what they must do, and then tells them how they can do it. So the apostle Paul, when he commanded the Corinthians to speak the same thing, and be united in the same judgment, tells them to submit themselves to those of the house of Stephanas, and to all such.

The fourth extract, where St. Paul says he had not dominion over the faith of his brethren, was intended simply to state that that apostle acted in a subordinate capacity, and not in his own right. Dominion is defined to be "sovereign or supreme authority." (Webster). No one could have dominion over faith but God. The

right of a subordinate officer to decide the proper construction of the law, and to say what was faith as defined by it, does not give him dominion over the faith. To have dominion over faith is to say what it shall be, not what it is. It is the power to create, not the power simply to declare. The apostle certainly did not assume to create faith, while he as certainly did assume the right to declare what was, and what was not, of faith. He did not mean to say to these same brethren, whose errors of construction he had expressly condemned in his first Epistle, that he had usurped authority not granted to him.

In the fifth extract the apostle tells those of his brethren who lack wisdom, how they can obtain it.

The prayer of faith is, no doubt, one means of obtaining Christian wisdom; but it is not the only means pointed out in the law, and is not exclusive of those other means mentioned in other portions of the Written Word. The existence of this means is not incompatible with the existence of the others. It is said in one place that we are saved by faith; in another, by baptism; in another still, by grace. One does not exclude the others. We must put them all together, and give force and effect to all, so that all may stand, and the will of the lawmaker be consistently carried out in all things, as He unquestionably intended to accomplish some good purpose by each and all. The apostle James did not intend to contradict his own practice in the Council of Jerusalem, nor the command of Christ to hear the church, nor those of St. Paul to obey the rulers of the church, nor those of St. Peter to follow their under-shepherds, nor the test given by St. John, that they who heard not the rulers of the Church were false prophets.

In reference to the sixth passage, it will readily be seen

that it does not at all conflict with the ultimate right of the church to construe the code for all. The Scriptures may be profitable to the individual reader, who is allowed to construe in the first instance. A very large portion of them is taken up in the simple relation of the most touching incidents connected with God's early dealings with His Chosen people — of signal displays of mercy, and the infliction of punishment. There are numerous biographical sketches, (or history teaching by example) of renowned and faithful servants of God. The New Testament contains the simple narrative of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Saviour, and the history of the labors and sufferings of the early saints. Besides the historical portions, there are many plain and simple commands, and many edifying instances of faith and humility. But after all the plain portions of the Written Word, there are some things hard to be understood that must still be understood.

If we take the Scriptures as construed by each individual for himself in the last resort, as the sole way, then the inexorable rules of logic require us to assume, that the Scriptures are plain and easily understood by all of every grade of capacity. This crippling and mutilating theory does the utmost injustice to the lawgiver, by forgetting that his code must be complete, while the way is plain. The system must attain the great, and extensive and perfect ends sought; and this cannot be done by a code containing so few and so simple provisions, as to be perfectly plain to all unaided capacities, under all circumstances. The code must be complete by containing all the provisions necessary to reach the perfect ends sought; and this cannot be done except by the aid of an infallible tribunal.

To assume that a supernatural system should contain

nothing but plain truths, equally within the unaided reach of all, is substantially to assume that God could not reveal any high and sublime truths to man, and that his revealed law could contain no mysteries. On the contrary, it would seem plain to good sense, that if God made any direct revelation to mankind, He would reveal many truths of so sublime a character, as to fill and test the highest capacity of the human mind; not only for the purpose of giving us some idea of the character of infinite wisdom, but some conception of the blessedness of that state which is to come.

The Catholic theory is the only one that makes the way plain, while the code is left complete and full, in every particular. It makes the way plain, not by mutilating the law, but by elevating the minds and judgments of all to the same infallible standard of construction.

It seems from the reasons and authorities given in the preceding pages, that the Christians in the days of the apostles, had the same means of arriving at the true interpretation of the words in which the law of Christ had been promulgated, as the citizens of the United States, and of all the civilized governments of earth, have of ascertaining the correct construction of the laws of the country.

When the Christians of those days misconstrued the law, their construction was overruled by those who had the rule over them; and, when the misconstruction arose among the teachers themselves, a council was called to consider the matter, and their error infallibly corrected. Nothing could be more consistent and logical than this efficient process, founded and based, as it is, upon the simplest principles whereon all society must rest. When a teacher of science is instructing his pupil, he puts into his hands a treatise upon the science intended

to be taught; and yet he overrules all misconstructions of the student. And nothing could be more simple and reasonable than the question asked by the Eunuch of Phillip. The latter had asked the former this question: "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The Eunuch answered: "How can I, except some man should guide me?"

A passage from St. Peter examined.

In this connection it becomes necessary to notice a very clear passage from the Second Epistle of St. Peter, which seems to be a conclusive proof of the correctness of the position we have taken; namely: that the right of private interpretation in the last resort, does not, and cannot exist in the Christian system, any more than it does or can exist in any other system of law.

The apostle after telling his brethren that they would do well to take heed to the sure word of prophecy, says:

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The prophecies to be interpreted were those of Scripture. The word "interpretation" is one of the most definite and certain in the language. When applied to prophecy, it is defined to be, "the act of expounding or unfolding what is not understood or not obvious." (Webster) So, the word private in this connection, i. e. "private interpretation," is equally definite and certain, and must mean "individual; personal; in contradistinction from public or national." (Webster.) The phrase "private interpretation," would seem too plain to be misunderstood; and, therefore, the apostle denied the right of interpretation to individual members.

It cannot be said that the context shows another meaning; because we cannot resort to the context, when the words are clear and definite, and need no explanation. But when we look to the context, we can see nothing to change the clear significance of the terms used.

When we look into the whole spirit and drift of this Second Epistle of St. Peter, it will be seen that the great leading object had in view by the apostle, was to strengthen the brethren in the faith—to point out the danger of heresy, the character of those who would introduce it, and how it might be avoided. For these purposes, he first speaks of the character of the true faith and its blessed consequences, and then gives them the proofs of its divine origin, by referring to the testimony given of Christ from heaven on the Holy Mount, and also the testimony of the holy prophets; and that they might know how to use this testimony properly, and to caution them against the errors of those he afterwards describes, he tells them, “knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation;” and then gives them the reason why it is not so, because it did not come by the will of man, but of God, and being His Word, was not the subject of private interpretation, as if it were the word of man, but was subject to the interpretation of His authorized teachers, in the same way as the doctrines of the new dispensation, which the apostles and elders taught.

Pursuing the same train of reasoning, he then tells them of “false teachers, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies,” that “they are presumptuous and self-willed”—that “they speak evil of the things that they understand not”—that “they allure those that were clear escaped from them who live in error”—and “while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the serv-

ants of corruption." How well this description of these false teachers agrees with that of St. Paul, where he speaks of the "unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped," in his Epistle to Titus. The apostle Peter then goes on to say, that his object was to remind them of the words of the holy prophets and of the "commandment of the apostles"—the teachers of the church; and in the close of his Epistle, he gives them an instance of the evil of private interpretation in those "unlearned and unstable" persons, who wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction.

Is not this theory intolerant?

Is not this theory intolerant? Is it not illiberal? It may be so. But was there ever a system of just law, or of truth, in the universe, that was not inflexible and intolerant? Must that which is true yield to that which is false? How could Christ make any law but that which is just? And how could He fail to execute a just law? Is He not bound by the irresistible force of His own attributes to execute justice? Has he not pledged, in advance, His eternal veracity, that not one jot or tittle of the law shall fail? How can a lawgiver, after he has said, "you must do this, and you must not do that, and this shall be the consequence of your disobedience," fail to fulfil his word, unless he is not to be believed? For what purpose is government instituted? Is it to indulge and excuse men who will not learn? What sort of system would it be, that had so little truth in it, and so little claim to respect, that, after laying down positive rules in positive terms for both faith and act, still did not require those rules to be believed and obeyed? The laws of civil government require every man to know the law. "Ignorance of the law excuseth no man," is

the fixed maxim of the code. And if ignorance of the law did excuse a man, who would care to know the law? The law favors the diligent and obedient, not the idle and disobedient.

When we refer to the laws of nature, we find them equally inflexible, except when God Himself pleases to suspend or overcome. If a man ignorantly violates the laws of nature, he must suffer. It is his duty, his interest, his business to learn, and he has the means of doing so. He cannot expect to escape, when others do not. No man can lift himself above the laws of nature or of truth, except at his own peril.

With respect to the perfect law of Christ, why should it not require the same implicit obedience? For what noble purpose was this law given, and why is it impossible without faith to please God, if the law is not to be believed? Heaven being the free gift of God, He had the right to fix the terms upon which it should be attained. He had the right to determine what acts and belief he would consider as merit, although they were not meritorious in themselves, but only so when judged by a system established and given through grace.

That it is but reasonable and just that God should govern the universe, there would seem to be no doubt, unless we can deny that He created it. And when He makes known His law, and gives men sufficient evidence of the fact, and they refuse to believe and obey, ought they to be rewarded for this? So far as the government of God is concerned, heresy is just as much a sin as any other, though it may differ in degree.

There is no illustration more often used by latitudinarians than this, that we are all traveling different roads to the same point — we all aim to get to heaven, and only go there by different paths. But, unfortunately,

there is but one way mentioned, and he that climbeth up some other way is not entitled to enter, because he is a "thief and a robber."

God made both earth and heaven, and opened up the only way that leads from one to the other; therefore, who ever reaches that happy abode, must travel this provided way.

Is not that theory of mere apparent mercy, in itself, the most delusive cruelty? There is nothing, perhaps, in this world, that has done more injury than mistaken mercy.

The jury that acquits the guilty culprit, through mistaken sympathy, and turns him again loose upon society, commits a cruel act. It is mercy to the guilty, and cruelty to the innocent. It is a confusion of all just distinctions, or rather, a reversal of all just distinctions.

To assume that the way to heaven is wider than it really is, must be the greatest of all mistakes. It is certain that such assumption, however flattering to our pride and vanity, will not widen the way, in fact. It forever remains as narrow as before, and the same prediction still inexorably exists, "few there be that find it." The more men are taught to believe that Christianity consists mainly in good conduct, and not in both faith and works, the more faith is degraded from its due importance in the system, and the more God is robbed of the homage due to Him, and the more infidelity and disunion are encouraged and propagated. It is a very flattering and insinuating, but delusive thought, that Christian perfection consists mostly of good conduct—that we can believe almost anything—that there are numerous roads to heaven, suited to the convenience, prejudices, and tastes of different travelers—that God not only gave His only Son to die for us, but has given us

a wide latitude of belief, and made so great a variety of ways to heaven that all can be suited.

It must be obvious to the reflective mind, that if a system of religion require faith at all, it is just as rational to require it as to all, as to a part. The system depends entirely upon the right and authority of him who founds it. When established by God, His authority is conclusive. All we desire to know is His will. This must be obeyed. It is, then, just as reasonable that we should all be required to believe the same things, and join the same Church, as to believe any other article of faith, or do any other act required by the law. These requirements are not unreasonable, but are logical and sensible in the very nature of Christ's one kingdom.

A logical, united, and exclusive system is more like truth, will always prove the greatest ultimate results, and is, for that reason, the best humanity at last. If a man can be made to believe that he can be saved almost anywhere, with almost any sort of faith, he naturally becomes indifferent to a theory that is indifferent to itself. He consults his tastes, and mere personal partialities, and joins those whom he likes best as friends and neighbors. Religion, with him, becomes a secondary consideration. It sinks down in his estimation, and ceases to command his genuine reverence and respect. A chameleon theory, and a gum-elastic conscience, are equally inconsistent with truth and justice.

Another reflection is this — that wherever the limits are fixed, they must, from the nature of this permanent system, have been so fixed at the beginning, and must so continue unto the end. Whatever was required to be believed at the beginning, must be required to be believed now and at all future times. The limits of faith cannot be extended or contracted, so as to suit this or

that one; for if this were done from time to time, there would soon be but the shadow, and not the substance of faith left.

This exclusive and rigid system is the Catholic. It is based upon the idea that Christ never did establish but one church, and that the visible—that more than one true church never was, and never could be required, and was never contemplated by the Divine Founder of the institution; and that, as a general rule, salvation must be found in that one church. The theory admits one exception (made by the law itself) in the case of invincible ignorance, where a baptized person, without prejudice, and with true humility and perseverance, has faithfully sought for the entire truth, and, for want of opportunity, has failed to find it.

CHAPTER V

THE PRIMACY OF SAINT PETER

The executive power must exist in the visible church.

If we concede that Christ was a Divine Lawgiver, Who prescribed a fundamental unchangeable law for the practical government of men while in this state of being, we are then forced by the plainest and clearest principles whereon all governments intended for men must rest, to concede that His subjects were intended to be governed in unity, and not in discord. The moment we concede the character of Christ as the author of a practical system, we are also forced to concede that in the government He instituted, there must exist those necessary elements, without which government itself cannot exist.

That the executive power must exist in every practical government, is as clear, as that the legislative and judicial powers are required. We can as readily conceive of a government without the legislative, as without the executive and judicial powers. There cannot be a law prescribed without legislation, nor can it be a law at all unless intended to constitute a rule for the parties governed; and it cannot be a rule, unless intended to be practically administered; and this practical administration cannot be attained, unless the executive and judicial powers both exist in the system. I cannot form a conception of a visible association of men, governed by a

positive unchangeable law, without the existence of the executive and judicial powers placed somewhere in the institution. Nor can I conceive of any practical and efficient system of government, wherein the executive and judicial powers are not co-extensive with the actual exercise of the power of legislation. In other words, where the executive and judicial powers do not have jurisdiction to enforce, practically, all the laws intended for practical application; for if these powers exist in the system at all, then for what purpose do they exist but to enforce all those portions of the law intended to be put in practical operation?

If the position be true, that the executive power exists in the system of Christ, that power must have been placed somewhere, either in the hands of an individual and his successors, or in the hands of several. The Catholic theory holds that our Lord conferred this power upon a single individual and his successors.

“The idea of supremacy,” says Cardinal Wiseman, “involves two distinct, but closely allied, prerogatives: the first is that the Holy See is the center of unity; the second, that it is the fountain of authority. By the first is signified that all the faithful must be in communion with it, through their respective pastors, who form an unbroken chain of connection from the lowliest member of the flock, to him who has been constituted its universal shepherd.

“We likewise hold the Pope to be the source of authority; as all the subordinate rulers of the church are subject to him, and receive directly, or indirectly, their jurisdiction from and by him. Thus the executive power is vested in his hands for all spiritual purposes within her; to him is given the charge of confirming his brethren in the faith; his office is to watch over the correction of

abuses, and the maintenance of discipline throughout the church; in case of error springing up in any part, he must make the necessary investigation to discover it and condemn it; and either bring the refractory to submission, or separate them, as withered branches, from the vine. In cases of great and influential disorder in faith or practice, he convenes a general council of the pastors of the Church; presides over them in person, or by his legates; and sanctions, by his approbation, its canons or decrees. * * *

“The supremacy which I have described is of a character purely spiritual, and has no connection with the possession of any temporal jurisdiction. The sovereignty of the Pope over his own dominions is no essential portion of his dignity; his supremacy was not the less before it was acquired: and should the unsearchable decrees of Providence, in the lapse of ages, deprive the Holy See of its temporal sovereignty, as happened to the seventh Pius, through the usurpation of a conqueror, its dominion over the Church and over the consciences of the faithful, would not be thereby impaired.” (Morefield Lectures, p. 226.)

The scriptural proofs of the primacy of St. Peter examined.

The first passage which bears upon this question, is taken from the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, verse 42: “And when Jesus beheld him he said, thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a Stone.” According to the Douay Bible, “thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter.”

In his work upon the primacy of St. Peter Bishop

Kenrick says that Cephass is a Syro-Chaldaic term, which signifies rock. (p. 24.)

It had been a practice with God, on particular occasions, to change the names of his servants when bestowing upon them some signal pre-eminence. For example, when God made a great covenant with Abram, he changed his name to Abraham, and that of his wife from Sarai to Sarah. So, when Jacob wrestled with the angel and refused to let him go without a blessing, the angel blessed him and said: "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." (Gen. xvii, 5-15; xxxiii, 28-29.) The moment Christ saw Simon he said, "thou shalt be called Cephas."

It would seem clear that Christ had some important object in view, when He gave Peter his name, which is not mentioned at the time it was given. But it does not matter when or where the reason for the change of name is given, so it is given.

In the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel we have the explanation:

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

It must be conceded that this is one of the most emphatic passages to be found in the four Gospels, and must teem with meaning of the greatest importance.

The first question that gives rise to a difference of opinion, is whether Peter is the rock upon which the Church was to be founded. Many Protestant authors concede that he was, while others contend that the truth revealed to Peter was alluded to by our Lord as "this rock." All Catholic writers, whose works I have read, insist that the clear meaning of the passage is, as if written, "Thou art a rock, and upon this rock I will build my church." Mr. Campbell, in his debate with Bishop Purcell, p. 84, gives this reading: "Thou art stone, and upon this rock (on this great truth which flesh and blood has not revealed to thee) I will build my church."

There are circumstances which seem clearly to refute the interpretation of Mr. Campbell.

Our Lord had previously given Simon the surname of Peter, without giving him any reason for it; and now, in the commencement of His reply, He simply calls him Simon Bar-Jona, and then gives him the reason why he is blessed, because the Father had revealed to him this great truth. Then following the blessing, and the reason given for it, our Lord uses that most emphatic affirmation: "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter." When our Lord first called him Cephas, His language was not so emphatic. It was simply "thou shalt be called Cephas."

Now for what purpose and for what intent, did our Lord use this emphatic language? The phrase is too emphatic to be idle and meaningless. Besides, our Lord never did an idle thing. He must have had some end to signify. What was it? I could never find a Protest-

ant writer who could give any plausible reason for the use of that emphatic statement. "That thou art Peter," and yet deny that he was the rock. What conceivable purpose could Christ have had in view, but to make that statement the basis of that which immediately followed—"and upon this rock I will build my church?"

The true and simple view of this passage would seem to be this: Our Lord, at the beginning, gave Simon his surname, without stating to him any reason for the act. God, the Father, afterwards reveals to Peter the Divinity of Christ. Our Lord called out the confession of Peter, not that He needed to be informed of the facts inquired after, but for the purpose of affording Him a fitting opportunity of constituting Peter the foundation of the Church. Peter had been favored by a special revelation, and our Lord knew this fact. When Peter had confessed our Lord reaffirmed the name Peter, for the purpose of letting him know that he was not only a rock, but the rock upon which the Church should be built, and then He states the character of the Church.

This view gives force and effect to every part of the reply of our Lord to Peter, and does not leave the emphatic affirmation "thou art Peter," to stand in such close connection with "and upon this rock," etc., and yet be idle and meaningless. The very reason why our Lord at first only called him Simon, was to reserve the affirmation that he was Peter, for the purpose of putting it in close and immediate connection with "this rock."

The opposite construction cannot be true, because it breaks the chain of unity running through the whole passage. Everything in it has a connection with Peter. He is the first pronounced blessed—he is then told that he is Peter, and that the Church should be built upon

him, and then he is promised the keys. That the promise to build the church was connected with Peter, is further shown from that which follows. Why should our Lord continue His promises in this form, "And I will give unto thee the keys," etc., unless both promises related to Peter? There are three sentences contained in our Lord's reply to Peter, and they all relate to him and matters connected with him. The first and third confessedly relate to Peter. Why does not that in the middle have relation to Peter also? If we concede that the church was founded on Peter, we can readily see why Christ defined the character of the structure to be built on Peter. The character of the Church necessarily qualified the prerogative of the apostle. The promise to build would not be definite, unless the character of the thing to be built was also given. So, when our Lord promised the keys, He at once states what they will enable Peter to do.

It was objected by Mr. Campbell, as well as others, that Peter could not be the rock, because Christ said "Thou" in the second, and "this" in the third person. "To have addressed Peter in the second and third persons as both present and absent, in the same breath, is wholly unprecedented." (Debate C. & P., 94.)

But with all due deference to the opinion of the learned debater, his objection seems more plausible than sound. Our Lord first tells Peter that he is a rock, and after that, so long as He speaks of Peter under that symbol, He very properly uses the third person. But when He comes to speak of Peter, not as the rock, but as the earthly head of the Church, holding the keys, then our Lord uses the second person. I cannot see any violation of correct usage in this; but the use of the third person in one case, and of the second in the other, was in strict

accordance with the figure used by Christ. Having first declared Peter a rock, so long as He kept that symbol in His eye, He would regard him in that light, and speak of him accordingly. The interpreter of a dream, of a parable first tells you that he will give the interpretation, and after that he proceeds to use language in a positive form — “the reapers are the angels,” “the harvest is the end of the world.”

“Bloomfield,” says Bishop Kenrick, “a recent Anglican commentator, observes that every modern expositor of note has abandoned the distinction between Peter and rock as untenable. Bishop Marsh, quoted by him, says that ‘it would be a desperate undertaking to prove that Christ meant any other person than Peter.’ Rosenmuller, the German rationalist, coincides in this critical judgment: ‘The rock,’ says he, ‘is neither the confession of Peter, nor of Christ pointing out Himself by His finger, or by a shake of the head (which interpretations the context does not admit), but Peter himself.” (The Primacy, 29.)

The learned author says on the next page:

“In ‘Gerhard’s Institutes of Biblical Criticism,’ is contained the following just observation — Canon 511: ‘The most obvious and natural sense is to be set aside only when it is absolutely contradictory to something plainly taught in Scripture.’ He then remarks that ‘the opposite way has been taken by all sects’; and, quoting the 18th verse of the 16th chapter of St. Matthew, observes: ‘Building on Peter is explained, by some, as contrary to the faith that Christ is the only foundation, (I Cor. iii, 12), and as favoring the succession of Peter and his successors; but the connection shows that Peter IS HERE PLAINLY MEANT.’ Such is the language of this text-book of so many Protestant colleges and

theological institutions, both in this country and in England."

Mr. Thompson of Glasgow, in his *Monatessaron*, concedes that "Peter was the rock on which Christ said His church should be built." The same author states that "Protestants have betrayed unnecessary fears, and have, therefore, used all the **HARDIHOOD OF LAWLESS CRITICISM** in their attempts to reason away the Catholic interpretation." (Cited in the *Primacy*, 31.)

It has been often objected, as it was by Mr. Campbell (*Debate C. & P.*, 95), that Peter could not be the rock upon which the Church was built, because this would be a contradiction of other portions of Scripture. In the third chapter of first Corinthians it is said: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And in the second chapter of Ephesians the apostle says, alluding to the faithful: "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone."

The term foundation has several meanings, one of which is "the basis of an edifice; that part of a building which lies upon the ground, usually a wall of stone which supports the edifice." (Webster.)

It is evident that the apostle used the word with reference to this sense, as he speaks of foundations as having been laid. And were we to adopt the principles of criticism urged by Mr. Campbell, we should make the apostle contradict himself; because, in the first extract the apostle speaks of Christ as the foundation, and does not mention that apostles and prophets composed it in part as he does in the second. I am not aware of any text in which our Lord was ever spoken of as constituting the foundation, in whole or in part, that does not speak with reference to a foundation laid, not selected.

The term has another and a wider signification, which is "the basis or ground work of any thing; that on which anything stands and by which it is supported." (Webster.) A rock is "a large mass of stony matter, either bedded in the earth, or resting upon its surface." (Webster.) A rock, upon which a building is based, is "bedded in the earth." It was with reference to this sense, that Peter was called the rock. Our Lord, when He spoke of building His church upon a rock, used the word rock in the same sense He did when speaking of the wise man, whose house "fell not: for it was founded on a rock." That must be a foundation upon which an edifice is founded.

The scriptural proofs further considered.

If we concede that Peter was the rock, then we concede that he was superior to the other apostles, who were not the rock, but only a part of the foundation as laid by Christ. In what then did this superiority consist? The Catholic theory holds that superior official power was conferred on this great apostle. This is denied by Protestants; and the most plausible ground that can be taken (after conceding that Peter was the rock) to defeat the Catholic construction, is that the promise to build the church on Peter, was fulfilled by his being the first sent to convert both Jews and Gentiles, so that in some sense, the Church might be said to rise from him.

But this explanation would seem to be entirely too narrow, and in conflict with the plain and obvious figure used by Christ. It would seem to be about as erroneously restrictive, as that narrow construction which sought to confine salvation alone to the Jews, when the wide commission was, "Go teach all nations"—"Preach the Gospel to every creature."

The rock upon which an edifice is built, is contemplated as continuing in the same permanent state it was in, at the precise time when the building was erected. If we say that our Lord first created the office of Supreme head of the Church on earth, as He did the office of teacher in the commission, and afterwards addressed Peter in his official capacity, then we can see how Peter could be appropriately called the rock upon which the church was built. The power and effect of the office would always be the same as at the first, and the Church might well rest upon it. The Church was regarded by Christ as a permanent structure, and the rock or foundation upon which it is built, must have been viewed by Him as equally continuing. The permanency of one must have been commensurate with that of the other.

That this is the correct view would seem to be clear from the fact, that the stability of the Church is but the consequence of this foundation. When our Lord said the foolish man built his house upon the sand and it fell, we must conclude that it fell because of the insecurity of the foundation. This conclusion is shown to be correct from the fact, that when our Lord spoke of the wise man who built his house upon a rock, He said "it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock." (Matt. vii, 25.) Here the cause of the stability of the house was its rock foundation. So, when Christ says, "and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," the relation of the structure to the foundation is so close, that we must say the stability of the building is the consequence of the stability of the foundation. Christ made Peter the rock, and the stability of the rock came from Christ, its Creator.

Our Lord gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom,

and the consequence of this possession of the keys of the entire kingdom was the Supreme power to bind and loose. In other words, the power to bind and loose was but a consequence flowing from the keys of the entire kingdom, and was a power supreme over all. Observe the clear and explicit language of our Lord: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed in heaven."

The delivery of keys has always been a symbol of supreme command. (See Rev. iii, 7.) In the 22nd chapter of Isaiah, God, speaking of His Son, says: "And I will commit my government into His hands * * * and the key of the house of David will I lay upon His shoulder: so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." So, in the first chapter of Revelations, the keys mentioned in verse 18, were symbols of supreme command. So, at law, where the delivery of personal property is necessary to pass the title, the delivery of the key of the warehouse in which the goods are stored, is a symbolical delivery which is regarded as equivalent to an actual delivery, and passes the command of the property to the purchaser.

This is so in the usage of all nations. In the very nature of the symbol it can mean nothing else. The delivery of the keys of a fortress or walled city to a conqueror is a surrender of the same into his possession. This very act yields up the command of the place by one party, and passes it to the other. When, therefore, our Lord gave Peter the keys of His kingdom, what else could He mean, but to give him, to whom He committed the keys, the supreme command? And that our Lord created an office by this act, would also seem clear. His

system itself was permanent. The gates and keys of this kingdom were part of this permanent kingdom. There is no limitation put to the duration of this power in this permanent kingdom, any more than there is to the office of President of the United States, in our Constitution. But our Lord says, without any limitation as to the time, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

The kingdom meant is the visible church, whose gates require to be often opened, and then shut. Do the gates of the city, after being opened for the first time, always stand open after that? And to all persons? If so, of what use are the gates? The very idea of keys and gates, presupposes the utility of opening to all who are entitled to enter, and of shutting against all who would enter improperly. True, the keys were necessary to open the gates for the first time; but they are equally necessary to open and shut, at intervals, through all coming time. The prophet said Christ should open and no man should shut, and no man should open. Christ was to do both; and what He does by His agent, He does Himself.

When our Lord conferred the power to bind and loose upon all, He did not promise them the keys, as he did separately to Peter. He was not an idle lawgiver. When He conferred a power separately upon a certain person, He intended by the very act, to give him a peculiar vocation, although the same power was conferred upon others collectively including the person upon whom it was separately conferred.

This is made clear by the following extract:

"So, when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto Him, yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith

to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto Him, yea, Lord; thou knowest I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, lovest thou me? And he said unto Him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." (John xxi.)

It is true that Mr. Campbell and others object to the interpretation of sheep as bishops, and lambs as laity. But while they make this objection, they do not help us any by informing us what Christ did, in their opinion, mean by this distinction. He must have meant something; otherwise the distinction was idle and useless. What then did he mean?

In the tenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, when Christ speaks of His entire flock, as separated from the world, He simply called them sheep. But when he comes to speak of them as distinguished among themselves into two classes, He calls one class lambs, and the other sheep.

That this meaning is correct, would seem plain when we consider that Christ called Himself the Shepherd, and St. Peter afterwards called Him the Chief Shepherd. There cannot be a Chief Shepherd without under-shepherds. The comparison of the sheep fold is kept up by the apostles Peter and Paul, as we have already seen. That the laity are meant by lambs would seem clear from the fact that the lambs are accustomed to follow the sheep; and St. Paul tells his brethren to obey, submit to, and follow the faith of them who had the rule over them.

Whether this distinction is correct or not, one thing

is clear, that the two classes, lambs and sheep, did comprise the entire flock, and they were all committed separately to Peter. And this being true, Peter bore to all the others the superior relation of under-shepherd, next in authority to Christ; and he must of necessity, have had superior jurisdiction over those who bore to him the subordinate relation of sheep to their shepherd. To say otherwise would destroy the unity of the whole figure; for the commission to feed is always a commission to govern and direct, as may be conclusively seen, by an examination of the following:

II Kings v, 2; Ps. lxxvii, 71, 72; Ezech. xxxii, 1-10; Jer. iii, 15; xxiii, 1, 2, 4; Nath. iii, 18c; Ls. xl, 11; Mich. vii, 14; Ezech. xxxii, 10-23; John x, 1; i Peter v. 4, 2; Acts xx, 28.

That the whole flock was committed to Peter, is further shown by the twenty-second chapter of St. Luke's Gospel.

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you (in the plural), that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," in the Douay Bible, "confirm thy brethren."

It is conceded by all that the pronoun "you" referred to all the apostles. Why then did our Lord pray separately for Peter, and, when he is converted, he is charged to strengthen or confirm his brethren? We are not informed that He prayed separately for any one or more of the others.

If this passage stood alone, it could, perhaps, be explained upon some other hypothesis. But taken in connection with the fact that Christ promised the keys to Peter, and afterwards committed His entire flock to him, both lambs and sheep, the most simple and natural conclusion is that Christ used Peter as His superior agent to confirm the others.

CHAPTER VI

HAS GOD, BY MIRACLES, ATTESTED THE FAITH AND SANCTITY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH?

Preparatory remarks.

The question asked at the head of this Chapter, from the very nature of the case, demands a careful consideration, or none. It is of the utmost importance, as showing one of two very great results: either that miracles still continue in the church, or that the Church makes the most unfounded and arrogant claim to that which she does not possess, and supports this false claim by the greatest mass of unlimited fraud ever found among mankind; and especially among civilized men. For it may be said with truth, to be wholly unparalleled for its extent, duration, and character, in the annals of the world. It is then, deeply interesting to the Christian, and to the philosopher. For the result of such an investigation must satisfy the candid and unprejudiced inquirer, either that God has performed miracles as claimed by the Catholic Church, or that man is a creature possessing a wonderful capacity to delude and to be deluded, while he possesses but few powers of resistance, to protect himself from imposition. The result of such investigation must teach the patient inquirer a great lesson of faith, or a great lesson concerning human nature.

The theory of the Infidel.

Those results legitimately flowing from the existing constitution of nature, the infidel admits. All alleged special interpositions of Providence, in violation of the established order of nature, he rejects.

In support of these opinions, the most celebrated and acute of the English Infidels, David Hume, has assumed this comprehensive position :

“ A miracle,” he says, “ is the violation of the laws of nature ; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined.”

The language of this proposition, if taken in its strict literal sense, is stronger, perhaps, than Mr. Hume intended, and does not convey his idea clearly. The assumption, as stated, that a “ firm and unalterable experience has established ” the laws of nature, is too broad, if taken strictly, for the reason that it illogically assumes the falsehood of the question in debate without proof. His position, in effect, would then stand thus : “ A miracle is the violation of the laws of nature, and therefore, no man has ever witnessed it.” It assumes, in substance, that a miracle is impossible, and of course it never happened.

He who takes the position that a miracle is impossible, must assume one of two things to be true ; either, 1. That there is no Creator ; or 2. That, admitting the existence of such a Creator, in creating the world and giving to it and its inhabitants certain properties and laws, He resolved in advance, never, for any purpose, or any occasion, to interfere, in any manner, with the legitimate effects of this order. In assuming the first

position to avoid the possibility of any violation of this order, the party must also assume the eternal existence of this order of nature; for if it be the result of chance at any time, this same chance may certainly undo what it had done. If mere chance could possibly originate a system of any kind, surely it could modify or destroy. And the same may be said of God. If He created, He surely can modify, destroy, or suspend, unless He had resolved not to do so. If the second position be assumed, that God has resolved, in Himself, not to interfere with the regular operation of what we call the laws of nature, it being an affirmative proposition, he who assumes, must prove it.

It occurs to me as clear, that although our knowledge of the laws of nature may be limited, and, therefore, not include a knowledge of all; yet we have a certain and positive knowledge of some of these laws, or we have no certain knowledge of anything. If we have a certain and positive knowledge of the operation and effect of the more familiar laws of nature, under a given state of circumstances, then we can determine with certainty, when a sensible violation of these known laws of nature, occurs under the same circumstances. There is, therefore, a plain distinction between an event merely new, and one directly in violation of a known law of nature. A miracle may not be new in its kind, because like miracles may have occurred before, and may occur again. But I do not understand Mr. Hume as intending to assert that miracles are impossible. His objection lies against the competency of the testimony offered. I understand him as assuming, substantially, that, as a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature,—and as the general uniform operation of those laws has been proven by general experience, the proof against a miracle is “as

entire as any argument drawn from experience." But does he intend to maintain that an argument, drawn from experience, is conclusive and not, therefore, to be rebutted? or only *prima facie* true, and therefore, liable to be overcome by competent and sufficient testimony?

Although the strong language he uses, (that a firm and unalterable experience had established these laws of nature, and that the argument, drawn from them is entire), will bear the construction often given to his words; yet his illustrations, taken in connection with the statement of his general proposition, seem to show a different intent, and that it was not his purpose to assume an argument drawn from experience to be conclusive. When a writer is ambiguous, and his language may be construed in different ways, the honest and generous rule, is to give his language that construction which will best support the general scope and intent of his argument. Mr. Hume, then, as I understand him, intended to assume this ground: that the proof against miracles, drawn from experience, is *prima facie* true; and that the testimony of men is not competent to rebut this proposition.

If, then, a miracle be possible, it may have occurred; and if so, it surely may be proved in some way. The existence and operation of these laws are proven by human testimony, founded upon human experience; and if this evidence is competent to prove the existence and operation of a certain law of nature, cannot the same class of testimony establish the fact of its violation? It would seem that the same character of testimony, given by the *same beings*, would be competent for both purposes. As a miracle is possible, and may have happened, we will suppose for the sake of the argument only, that it has occurred. How, then, would Mr. Hume have proven it, under his theory? To say that a visible and

palpable fact may exist and be known to men, and yet to say that reason and philosophy deny all competent evidence of such a fact, is to degrade reason and philosophy, and would seem to be manifestly erroneous.

If it be said that the testimony of all mankind has proven the existence and effects of the known laws of nature, and that the testimony of only the few goes to sustain the existence of miracles — and as the testimony of the few, is in necessary and direct conflict with the testimony of the many; therefore, we must believe the many, and disbelieve the few, for we must disbelieve one or the other, I reply: that although we are not compelled to believe the many, and disbelieve the few in all cases; still, in this case, the argument would be conclusive, if it were true, that the testimony of the few, from the nature of the case, was in necessary conflict with the testimony of the many. But is this necessarily so? Before we can say there must, of necessity, be a conflict of testimony in such a case, we are compelled to assume that miracles are impossible; for if possible, they may have occurred, and if they did occur, they can be proved, and if proved, the witnesses are certainly not in conflict with any other true witnesses. Upon the hypothesis that miracles may have existed, and, therefore, may be susceptible of proof, there can be no necessary contradiction in the two classes of witnesses. One class proves the general rule, the other the exception. And when Mr. Hume gives as a reason, in substance, that experience has proven the general uniform operation of the laws of nature, and the same experience has also shown that men will sometimes lie; therefore, it is more reasonable to believe that men lie in regard to miracles, than that these laws have been violated, I am constrained to say, that he overlooks the fact, that God can only make a

revelation to mankind through miracles — that the probabilities and reasons why miracles should sometimes occur, are as great, if not greater, than those against them. For, without going into the subject at large, it occurs to me as the genuine dictate of pure reason — that as the properties infused into matter, and the instincts given unreasoning animals, are so different from the laws enacted for the government of rational free agents, they must be communicated in a different manner; and while the effect of properties and instincts would be uniform, and, for that reason, not require any new and additional interference, the effects of free agency would be variable, (though still confined within the limited powers of the rational creature), and, for that reason, would require the special interposition of the Creator at some period or other, and, perhaps, at different periods. Mr. Hume also overlooks the fact, that, although experience has shown that some men will lie, under the influence of certain motives, others will not under any known temptation; and that human testimony, for that reason, may be credible to the highest degree of moral certainty. I believe that London exists, and I believe it with the same certainty that I do any other of the most certain facts. This I believe purely upon human testimony. Now why should I adopt an arbitrary rule, and say that a miracle may occur, but there can be no testimony to prove it? Did the laws of any country ever admit the possible existence of important facts, and yet propose to reject all testimony to prove them? The facts had as well not exist at all.

Mr. Hume seems to have become so sensible of the arbitrary and sweeping nature of his general position, that he puts in this limitation.

“I beg,” he says, “the limitations here made may be

remarked, when I say that a miracle can never be proved so as to be the foundation of a system of religion; for I own that otherwise there may possibly be miracles or violations of the usual course of nature of such a kind as to admit of proof from human testimony."

Upon which the profound Starkie has these remarks:

"In what way the use to be made of a fact when proved, can affect the validity of the proof; or how it can be that a fact proved to be true, is not true for all purposes to which it is relevant, I pretend not to understand." (1 Starkie on Ev.)

And Mr. Starkie is surely right. This limitation of Mr. Hume cuts up his general position by the roots. All that he had before said about "a firm and unalterable experience," and the "entire" argument drawn from it against miracles, is at once unsaid by admitting that a miracle may exist, and may be proved by human testimony. His limitation is like a proviso repugnant to the purview of the statute itself; as if a statute granted a piece of land to A, provided such person does not exist.

The candor and manliness of Mr. Hume must be conceded, because he conceals none of the consequences of his theory, but lets us know distinctly the reasons which impel him to adopt his arbitrary rule for the exclusion of human testimony. He recommends his readers "to form a general resolution never to lend any attention to the testimony, (for miracles in favor of religion), with whatever specious pretext it may be covered." The reason he gives is because "those who are so silly as to examine the affair by that medium, and seek particular flaws in the testimony, are almost sure to be confounded." (Cited 2 Hay on Miracles, 196.)

The extent of this concession is certainly very great. How distressed must be the condition of that reasoner,

who, to sustain his position, is compelled to shut out all proof! But it must be conceded that this system is effectual. It is as much so as the maxim of pirates, that "dead men tell no tales." Mr. Hume does not kill the witnesses. He only closes their mouths by refusing to hear them. His means of suppressing testimony may be more merciful, but fully as arbitrary and irrational.

The best result of my reason and reflection is this — that a miracle is possible, and, therefore, not incredible — that the question whether a particular miraculous event occurred, is purely a question of fact, to be established by testimony — that to prove an event contrary to the order of nature, requires more testimony, or stronger proof, than to establish an ordinary event; because it requires a greater weight of testimony to rebut and overcome the *prima facie* presumption against miracles, than to establish a general case, in the first instance. He who assumes to overcome a *prima facie* presumption against him, must necessarily bring a greater amount of proof than he would be required to produce, if no such presumption stood in his way.

The True theory.

In reference to the true theory of miracles, I shall quote the language of Dr. Milner. (End of Con., Let. xxiii.)

"Methinks I hear some of your society thus asking me: Do you then pretend that your church possesses the miraculous power at the present day? I answer that the Church never possessed miraculous powers, in the sense of most Protestant writers, so as to be able to effect cures or other supernatural events at her own pleasure; for even the apostles could not do this, as we learn from the history of the lunatic child. (Matt. xvii, 16.) But this I say, that the Catholic Church, being always the be-

loved spouse of Christ, (Rev. xxi, 9) and continuing at all times to bring forth children of heroical sanctity, God fails not in this, any more than in past ages, to illustrate her and them by unquestionable miracles."

In reference to the case of the lunatic child, when the apostles inquired why they could not cast out the evil spirit, Christ told them, "because of your unbelief." But He also told them that "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

Nothing, perhaps, could show more fully the efficiency of prayer and fasting than this case. No doubt, this saying of our Lord, as well as the practice of the apostles in so often praying and fasting, gave rise to the practice in the churches, of praying and fasting when they asked the special interposition of heaven. The case of Peter is an example. (Acts xii.)

I suppose that every Christian will concede that man is a little more capable of some things than of others. He certainly can judge better of facts cognizant by his senses, than he can of the designs of God. He certainly can judge better as to the weight and credibility of the testimony of his own species, with whom he is familiar all his life, and in daily intercourse, than he can of the deep reasons of God. If, therefore, he sees an event, or it is clearly proven, which he knows is miraculous, if he knows anything, by what sort of reason can he reject his positive knowledge, for his mere conjectures? If a miracle be performed,—the manner—the time—the agent—are all immaterial. It does not matter by whom, when, or where, here, or there. If the event be established by satisfactory proof, it is still a miracle. It is matter of fact, and can be proved. If, therefore, a miracle be performed in answer to prayer and fasting, or at the tomb of a saint, or by his relics, is it not equally

a miracle? What right has anyone to say that God must perform His miracles in a particular manner? True, the Jews sought a sign from Christ, but He gave them none. The Devil challenged Him to cast Himself from the pinnacle of the temple, but He refused. The Jews said, "if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross, and we will believe you." But Christ heeded not their challenges.

And was it not reasonable that He should have thus acted? Could an infinite being be expected to consult a mere creature? Certainly not. It is true, Christ was bound to give proper and sufficient evidence; but the kind, the time, and the manner, and the amount, were for Him to decide — not for the party governed. It is enough that He has done right, whether men think so or not.

In reading the Gospel history, we cannot but be struck with the fact that Christ generally, if not always, performed His cures upon worthy persons, requiring them to have faith, and in many instances granting the request of the applicant, because of his faith. "Thy faith hath made thee whole." "Be it unto thee according to thy faith." And we are told by Mark that "he could there do no mighty work, save that He laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them." And Matthew says in reference to the same matter: "And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief." And it was also true of the Apostles. Their miracles were usually performed upon worthy objects, except in some cases to inflict punishment, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, and Elymas the sorcerer.

When I was a Deist, this conduct of Christ, in praising and rewarding every confiding display of faith, was with me a serious objection. I said: "This conduct is precisely such as we must expect of an impostor, as faith is

the very element of his success." But reflection satisfied me that there was nothing in this plausible objection. And in arriving at this latter conclusion, I adopted a rule that I have uniformly followed, and one that I conceive is just and true in itself. It is this: I first inquire if the proposition to be proved is possible. If possible, then I take the proposition as true for the sake of the argument only, and inquire if such conduct be compatible with the truth of the proposition, and consistent with it, under the existing circumstances. This rule forced me to admit, that if Christ were a Divine teacher, He would naturally require faith in the truths he taught; and that such conduct was as natural in a true, as in a false teacher; and of itself, therefore, proved nothing, for or against the truth of Christianity.

Another reflection is, that the gift of miracles was only promised by Christ to true faith. The promise is conditional. And it must also be conceded that a man may have faith at one time, and not at another. The apostles could not heal the lunatic child for want of faith, and Peter sank in the waves because of doubt, and this doubt was produced by momentary causes. It must also be admitted, that the frequency of miracles must, in the nature of the case, depend upon the object for which they are performed. Therefore, the simple fact that they are not so frequent at one time as another, is no objection. They may not be as necessary at one time and place as at another.

Another reflection is, that the apostles were chosen witnesses of God, as well as teachers. To prove their competency as inspired witnesses, frequent miracles were required. In the beginning, when the only question was the truth of Christianity, and not which is the true church, no miracles could be required to prove this latter

fact. We have no instance mentioned in the New Testament, where miracles were wrought by the relics of departed saints; but we are told miracles were wrought by aprons and handkerchiefs taken from Paul and by the Shadow of Peter, as also by the touch of Christ's garment. True, these appertained to living persons; but even upon abstract reasoning, were that to govern us, it is difficult to say that relics could not produce the same result, as the saint to whom they belonged is only gone home, and still lives, but in a perfect state. But in the case of the dead man brought to life by the touch of the prophet Elisha's bones, (II Kings xiii.), we have a positive example.

If, then, the object be to point out and illustrate the true church, a miracle wrought by the relics, or at the tomb, of a particular saint, would accomplish that purpose as efficiently as if performed by the saint while living. Upon abstract principles there can be no objection, it would seem. As to the manner, or the agent by which a supernatural event is produced, there can be no difference. The alleged miracles performed at the tombs, or by the relics of saints, are just as easy of detection, as if performed in other modes. It is no more objection to such miracles than it would be to the miracle of Christ in opening the eyes of the blind man with the spittle and clay, or opening the ears of the deaf by putting his fingers into them. The modes used by Christ were various. When he wished a piece of money to pay tribute, instead of creating it at once, he sent Peter to catch a fish, in the mouth of which he found it.

Doubtless the Jews thought the ceremony of anointing the eyes of the blind man with spittle and clay, exceedingly foolish and vulgar.

But I apprehend such objections are not entitled to much consideration. The satisfactory proof of one single

miracle will answer them all. Miracles afford a fund of amusement and ridicule to the unbelieving, the volatile, and the unfeeling. But to the sober, sincere, and patient inquirer, they will wear another aspect. The Scriptures are full of all sorts of miracles, great and small, sublime and ridiculous, as judged by some. Many were performed apparently for very trifling purposes. But we know not God's purposes.

In reference to Catholic miracles, Dr. Paley says: "It has long been observed, that Popish miracles happen in Popish countries; that they make no converts."

I have often observed that when some writers wish to state a matter, for which they cannot vouch, and yet wish to get the benefit of it, they introduce it in this way: "It is said or observed." That it has been so said is no doubt true; but the saying itself is untrue. The statement is general and simply says: "Popish miracles happen in Popish countries;" which means they never happen elsewhere. It will be easily seen upon examination, whether this statement be true, in reference to either particular. And in reference to the specifications and historical proofs of the Catholic miracles, I must refer to Dr. Milner's *End of Controversy*, Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, Dr. Hay on *Miracles*, and the *Works of Bishop England*, having already given to this subject all the space I can spare. In the work of Dr. Milner, which is easily obtained, the reader will find a condensed, but very able enumeration of Catholic miracles, and the proofs in support of them, as well as a most masterly exposure of the false theories, and misstatements of different Protestant writers, upon the subject of miracles. The work of Dr. Hay is a full and clear discussion of the whole subject. In Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, the miracles performed by particular persons are stated. In Bishop England's works, a statement of recent miracles, and the proofs to sustain them, will be found

CHAPTER VII

CAN THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES, SINGLY OR COMBINED, BE THE TRUE CHURCH?

The question at the heading of this chapter, has already been considered in part. A few additional considerations will be submitted.

While Protestants deny that the true visible church is infallible, they generally concede that she is so protected by Divine power, that she remains always the true visible church, always teaching the true faith. What difference can there be between such certain and unfailing protection and infallibility it is most difficult to see. Nor can it be well seen how the theory of a true visible church, always teaching the truth, can be reconciled with the right of private interpretation in the last resort. It would seem that such a church should be implicitly heard when she speaks, as she always, in the contemplation of this theory, speaks the truth.

If the Church should teach error, the gates of hell would prevail against her, and the promises of Christ would necessarily fail. From this admission two conclusions necessarily follow:

1. That the true Church could never teach error.
2. That she must remain visible and teaching from her birth to her final consummation.

It would then seem to be a very plain proposition, that whatever existing party of professed Christians claims to be the true church, must show a continued

line of ancestors to the age of the apostles. Under the admissions of all parties, the title to the true church has always resided in someone. As we cannot conceive of the continued fulfilment of the promises of Christ, without the continued existence of the same church, always teaching the same faith, and united under one government, as was the case in the days of the apostles, so, it follows, that the party who claims this identity, must trace the title back through the same continued and existing association. We cannot conceive how, consistently with the nature and purposes of the institution and promises of Christ, the Church could die, and be buried, and afterwards arise from the dead, in another age, and commence her interrupted career again. The Church in the days of the apostles, was unquestionably a visible, teaching, governing, united association of living men. She possesses all the vital elements of continued existence.

The concession of these facts is, in truth, a substantial settlement of the whole question, as to the Protestant claims.

As each party claims the right to the same thing, and to be now in possession of it, the weight, or onus of proof, will lie equally upon each, in the first instance. But as the Catholic Church is admitted to be older than any now existing party, she has made out a *prima facie* case, liable, it is true, to be disproved; but until disproved, must be held good, as against them. She has, therefore, nothing to do until the title can be shown, *prima facie*, to be in some other party, extending back beyond the period of her admitted existence. As the title can only exist in one party exclusively, when title is shown to be in one, it, of necessity, excludes all others, until the proof is overcome by other testimony.

The Protestant sects, at the threshold, are met by a very great difficulty. They must appear in some definite and certain form. Their claim must be based upon something tangible and consistent with itself. They can assume any form and shape they please, so it is not multifarious and contradictory. But when they do assume a certain shape, they must sustain it by competent proof. Their allegations and their proofs must correspond. They cannot allege one thing, and prove another. They can make their alleged true Church consist of any consistent requisities they please; but their proofs must correspond and show the continued existence of a church possessing these requisites.

The question then arises, what requisites shall they claim, as making up the true church? If each Protestant sect claims to be the exclusive true church, it necessarily rejects all the others. If, on the contrary, two or more combine, the alleged true Church is composed of multifarious contradictory and independent creeds; and their allegations are confused and inconsistent. In what shape then, shall they appear? And if the Protestant Church, thus composed, is still claimed to be the one true Church, what differences and discords could constitute separate and antagonistic churches?

And if they conclude to combine two or more different creeds in making up the Church, then what creeds shall be combined?

If we suppose that the first Protestant party is composed of those sects, called by some orthodox or Evangelical, such as Lutherans, Presbyterians, Moravians, Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians and others, what a strange and singular true Church this would be, as compared with the confessions of all parties! Different and contradictory doctrines — separate, independent, and

distinct organizations, with no common governmental head, composing the One united visible Church of the apostolic day!!! It might well be said of such an artificial being, that it "was without form and void."

If there was any true Church in the world, at the time of the Reformation, other than the Catholic Church, it was the unquestioned duty of Luther and all Protestants to join that Church, and not reform it. Could they not find it? If they could not, how could others find it? And if no one could find it, what sort of a true, visible universal Church was it?

The idea that there was a visible teaching Church, and yet that such a church could fail, would seem entirely inconsistent with the purposes of its organization, with the character of Christ as a Divine Lawmaker, and with His actual promises. Such a supposition is based upon the incorrect idea, that it was necessary for Christ to make a law and organize a Church—that having exhausted His powers in the effort, or become otherwise employed, or for some other reason, He cast the Church upon the earth, as a vessel in the middle of the ocean without a pilot; and having retired to His apartments, He said, "Let her travel."

And the idea that the true Church could teach any single error and remain the true Church—that she could be reformed in matters of faith—or that she could be composed of contradictory creeds, and distinct, separate, independent antagonistic organizations, would seem entirely illogical, and untrue in every particular. And we could just as readily believe that mere chance was the originator and projector

"Of all the wondrous worlds we see,"

as that any union could continue to exist in any associa-

tion of men, under the Protestant principle of individual interpretation in the last resort. And as chance may undo to-morrow what it has done to-day, such unity, if it should, by the merest possible accident, exist at any one time, could never be fixed and secure.

Taking the admissions of the parties as I find them, I am forced to conclude, that the Protestant sects, taken separately, or all combined, or in different combined parties, have each and all wholly failed in showing any title to be called the true church. And before they can make any consistent case, they must go back and amend their allegations — begin again at the beginning — withdraw their admissions — deny that Christ was any law-giver — that any visible, universal, teaching Church was ever intended — and insist that Christ promulgated no law, and organized no church, but that He merely discovered pre-existing truths, before undiscovered, and that, like any other philosopher, He left the truths He discovered, to be taught by those who pleased, and in the manner they pleased. This theory would at least be consistent with itself.

Have the promises of Christ failed?

From the reasons and proofs heretofore given, the question was reduced, in my judgment, to this — have the promises of Christ failed? Is there any true Church now in the world? And if it cannot now be found in the only Church that can show a continued and uninterrupted existence, extending back to the days of the apostles, then it can surely be found nowhere on earth. It is an institution that was, and is not.

It was a matter of the first importance, as I conceived, to know what powers and prerogatives the Catholic Church had always claimed; for to my mind it was clear

that the true Church must always know herself — know her duty — know her faith — know her rights — and knowing them, must always claim and assert them. I could not conceive how the true Church could lie against herself, or against her Divine Founder, by denying the truth in reference either to herself or to Christ.

When I hear a Church admit that her creed has been reformed, I cannot understand how she can be the true church. If it be in regard to a matter of faith, it is quite clear that she concedes that she cannot be such. Either she was right at first, or wrong at last, or vice versa; and in either case she was not the true church at one period of her existence, and must fail in her connection with the apostles. And when I hear a church not only admit that her creed has been reformed, but that it may still need reforming, and under her theory may be so reformed, I cannot understand how she can be the true church.

The Church having left the hands of the apostles, in possession of the true faith, and united in one government, it seemed clear that the same church, in all ages, must claim, not only a continued succession from the apostles, but also to teach the same doctrines at all times. If, then, I could find a church extending back to the apostolic days, always visible, always teaching, and always claiming to teach the doctrines once delivered to the saints, this fact, of itself, would constitute a very powerful argument in proving that such church was the true Church.

It being conceded that the Church left the hands of the apostles, claiming only the faith delivered, and that teaching was the end of its institution, the law of reason would always hold that, *prima facie*, the Church had always done her duty. For it is a plain principle of law,

as well as of common sense, that an officer is always presumed to do his duty; and he who alleges the contrary, must prove it. The fact that the officers do their duty, as a general rule, throws the burthen of proof upon him who alleges the contrary.

That the Catholic Church has always claimed to be the true Church, and to teach only the doctrines she received, in succession, from the apostles, is not denied by Protestants, during the period of her admitted existence. So long as they admit her to have existed, so long do they admit her to have claimed thus to act. As to the alleged period when the Catholic Church took its rise, Protestants are as much divided among themselves, as they are about other important questions. In his debate with Bishop Purcell, Mr. Campbell at first fixed this period at A. D. 1054, but subsequently fixed the time of the commencement of the degeneracy of the Roman diocese, and the separation of the true from the "grievously contaminated" Church about the year two hundred and fifty. But in his debate with Mr. Rice, some few years afterwards, Mr. C. further extended the existence of the church of Rome to the second century. "Taylor and others," he says, "have shown that all the abominations of Popery were hatched in the second century." (Debate C. & R., 423.) Mr. Rice says: "During the first five centuries of the Christian era, the church, though becoming gradually corrupt, did not become Papists." (Id., 298.) Mr. Rice, I believe, gives the Catholic Church about as late a beginning as any other Protestant. By the admissions of all, she is at least a thousand years older than any of the existing Protestant sects. She has, then, an admitted visible existence for the period of thirteen, out of the eighteen hundred years of the Christian era. The celebrated Dr. Middleton, in his

Free Enquiry, as the extracts I have already given will show, at first contends that the chief corruptions of Popery, as he calls them, were introduced in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries. He says that those Protestant authors, as Tillotson, Marshall, Dodwell, Dr. Waterland, Dr. Berriman, and others who admit that miracles continued during the first three centuries unwarily betrayed the Protestant cause. After stating that "every one must see what a resemblance the principle and practice of the fourth century, as they are described by the most eminent fathers of that age, bear to the present rites of the Popish Church," he says: "By granting the Romanists but a single age of miracles, after the time of the apostles, we shall be entangled in a series of difficulties whence we can never fairly extricate ourselves, till we allow the same powers also to the present age." (Cited Milner's End of Controversy, Let. xxii.)

This, I must say again, is candid and manly language. The renowned Dr. Middleton was a man of clear head, and too bold not to say what was necessary to sustain his case, and make it at least apparently consistent with itself. The admission is very clearly made that it would not do to admit that miracles continued after the apostles, for the reason that it would be betraying the Protestant cause to the Romanists. He insists that the Romanists must not be granted "a single age of miracles after the time of the apostles."

While Protestants deny that the Church of Rome, which has an admitted existence from between the second and the sixth century to this time, extended back to the very days of the apostles, they have all admitted the continued existence of a Church visible and teaching, claiming to teach only the doctrines received from the apostles, and to be the true church. Thus the Church

from which the Novatians separated in 250, and the Donatists in 311, was that Church, and then contained the overwhelming majority of all Christians.

The existence then of a Church, at so early a day after the apostles, claiming thus to have received and thus to teach, and to be the true Church, will make out a *prima facie* case, until disproved. Those who deny that such a Church was the true Church, and did so teach, must then show some other Church that was this true Church; for, since its existence is admitted by all, and one party shows a Church existing at that early day, and widely extended, claiming so to be, it throws the weight of proof upon the party that disputes its claims. When, therefore, we are referred to the Novatians and Donatists who not only separated without good cause, but perished and disappeared in a few centuries (as if the true Church could die), we cannot say the claim is at all disturbed, but we must say, it is strengthened, from the failure of proof against it. The attempt thus to defeat the claims of the Church, having the great mass of Christians in her communion, by such testimony, is a substantiation of her claim, as it shows no better can be brought against it.

If, then, the Catholic Church could not bring any testimony to prove her continued existence, back to the days of the apostles, except the admissions of her opponents, she would still make out her case from them, and from their entire failure to show where the true Church was before her admitted existence, and afterwards. For under the admission of all parties, whatever true church did exist at the death of the last apostle, must continue to exist. Those, therefore, who say the Catholic Church was not the true Church, must show some Church existing continually, both before and after the alleged birth

of that Church. When, therefore, they attempt to do this, by referring us to two sects that soon disappeared, they certainly fail. The advocates of the Catholic Church, bring in all the Christian writers of the first five centuries, from St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, to St. Gelasius in 492, and from these they bring a mass of testimony, that seems entirely conclusive.

Has the Catholic Church been uniform in her faith?

The next and most important question that arose in this inquiry, was whether the Catholic Church had always been uniform in her faith. That she had always so claimed, there could be no doubt. That the presumption, under the promises of Christ, as well as under the principles applicable to all governmental institutions, that they all accomplish the end intended, and in the manner prescribed, would throw upon her adversaries the burthen of proof to the contrary, was to my mind equally clear. This position I understood to be substantially conceded by Protestant controvertists. They, therefore, acting upon this ground, make certain charges of alleged contradictions in the creed of the Church, at different periods of her existence.

To examine impartially, and estimate justly, the force of these objections, it becomes necessary to understand distinctly what the Church herself holds to be faith, and what not. I found, upon examination, that the Church herself makes these several divisions:

1. There are articles of faith, which include those positive truths, facts and doctrines, which she holds Christ revealed to the apostles, and commanded them and their successors to teach to all nations, in all days, even to the end of the world. She holds that the system of Christianity is made up of certain truths, facts,

and doctrines, that must be believed by all, in all places, and at all times — that they are of such a character, as to be applicable to all persons, times, and places — are unvarying, certain, and fixed, and must ever so remain. She holds that under the law of Christ, there are certain things that must be believed — that faith is required by the system, and that as required, it must exist. In these, she claims infallibility.

2. Besides articles of faith, there is discipline, which is entirely different from doctrine, and in regard to which no infallibility is claimed, and no faith required, but only obedience in act. Discipline consists in those minor practical regulations or rules, which may vary with changing circumstances, and may be adapted to different times. They consist of such regulations as are deemed expedient to facilitate and carry out the practical administration of the fundamental laws of the institution. They are similar to the rules adopted by courts, and liable to be amended or changed at their pleasure, and which merely regard the mode, time, and manner in which parties must proceed at their bar.

3. Besides articles of faith and discipline, there are opinions. These opinions regard questions concerning which Christ made no positive revelation, and the apostles made no certain declaration. The members of the Church are allowed to hold either side, in reference to these questions, for the very reason that they are not matters of faith. This distinction is not new. The celebrated and beautiful saying of St. Augustine, so often quoted by statesmen, as well as Catholics, alludes to it: "In essentials, let there be unity — in non-essentials liberty — and in all things charity."

4. There are besides these, local customs peculiar to different countries and ages. These regard not faith.

The charges of Protestants against the uniformity of the Catholic Church, may be classed as follows :

1. Those which relate to the alleged introduction of new articles, never held before, being alleged additions to the faith.

2. Those which relate to alleged contradictory decisions of the Church in reference to the same articles of faith.

In reference to the first class of charges made by Protestants against the uniformity of the Church, as regards faith (and which relate to supposed additions to her articles), they are alleged by Catholics to have arisen from confounding the definition of the existing faith of the Church, with the creation of new tenets not flowing from the legitimate extension and application of admitted principles, but from the introduction of entirely novel and unheard of principles. In other words, that "they mistake the language of definition, for the words of creation."

In this late very able work, Dr. Ives says: "This reminds me of an error which, in the course of my examination, showed itself continually in Protestant statements, viz.: to date the commencement of a doctrine or practice at the time, when from some denial or neglect, such a doctrine or practice was made binding by an explicit written decree, although it had always existed in the Church." (Trials of a Mind, 124, Note.)

The importance of these charges, especially the principles involved, led me to make a careful examination of the matter, so far as my opportunities would allow. I first inquired whether, in any association of men, governed by a law promulgated in human language, and in which there resided any judicial power at all, these definitions would not, in the very nature and reason of the

case itself, most certainly occur, in the practical application of the law, to different cases as they should arise, in the course of ages. That is, whether these definitions, decrees, or decisions, are not inseparable from all practical government, over such intelligences as men; and whether, from the nature of the judicial power, such definitions could be avoided.

The people of the United States have, as their fundamental law, a Constitution. By this instrument there is one Supreme Court, whose duty it is to construe and apply the laws, constitutional and statutory, to cases that come before it. Much discussion arose at an early period, as to the proper construction of certain articles of the Constitution. These questions still arise, and must, in the nature of things, arise, in all future time. Events unforeseen, will bring up new questions from age to age, so long as the government shall last. A very important amendment to our constitution was made in 1804; and was occasioned by a very unexpected question that arose in the House of Representatives, in the election of President in 1801. "The Election of 1801," says Chancellor Kent, "threatened the tranquillity of the Union; and the difficulty that occurred in that case, in producing a constitutional choice, led to the amendment of the constitution on this very subject; but whether the amendment be for the better or for the worse, may well be doubted, and remains yet to be settled by the lights of experience." (1 Com., 280.)

And a concurrence of circumstances may occur at the next Presidential election, that will fully test, by "the lights of experience," the wisdom of this amendment to the Constitution, and such a concurrence may not happen in ten centuries, and may then arise. When, how-

ever, it does occur, it must give rise to new definitions, or new amendments, or both.

As regards questions of constitutional construction, they must hereafter arise in our courts, as well as in our Congress. Suppose, then, a new case should come up before the Supreme Court, a thousand years hence, involving the construction of an article of the Constitution, and that Court, by its solemn decision, should settle the construction of that instrument, could any sensible man say that the Court, in the contemplation of our system, had created a new part of the fundamental law, simply by declaring what that law meant? And could any man of fair mind and logical head, say, that the constitution had not always been what the Court declared it to mean? In other words in the contemplation of our theory, would the Constitution itself be abrogated, or changed in any particular, because that august Court had given it a construction never given before, but necessary to decide a new case, involving the point in controversy? I apprehend not. On the contrary, it would be admitted that the Constitution had always meant what it is declared to mean; and that such had always been the law. The power to declare what is the law — the existing law, is very different from the power to make a law. One is judicial and the other legislative — one is the power to create, and the other the power to construe that which is already made.

If, then, there be any government at all in the Church, the judicial power must reside in the institution — and if it does exist therein, must not these definitions occur, from time to time, from the very nature of the power itself? Can anyone form a conception of an association of men kept in unity, and governed by a law communi-

cated in human language, through a long course of centuries, and yet without any necessity for such definitions? I confess I cannot form such a conception. I cannot possibly imagine what sort of association, unity, or government it could be.

Law, properly so called, is a rule of conduct (and in the Christian system, of faith also) prescribed to free intelligent agents; and as the parties governed possess these characteristics, the law will be violated; and not only so, but in a multitude of instances, of the most complex character. This free agency of the governed will enable them to violate the law, and their intelligence will allow them to do so, in every variety of form, and under every plausible pretence. Hence continued definitions become inevitable, under any government of law.

Did not such instances occur in the days of the Apostles? And have they not occurred at intervals ever since? And must they not occur in the future?

A good while before the Council of Jerusalem was held, Peter had admitted the Gentile Cornelius and his household into the Church. The true faith had been preached over a great portion of the world, and churches formed at different places. During all this time the question making circumcision essential to salvation had not been raised. Had it been postponed a few years longer, it would have come up for decision, after the death of the apostle. It was never decided, however, until it did arise. When, however, it did come up it was finally decided and the Council issued its decree, settling that case.

After the days of the apostles, but at an early day, the question was first raised, whether it was necessary to rebaptize those who had apostatized, and then returned to the church. This question could not have arisen until

some case brought it up. The persecutions of the early Christians, long, bloody, and relentless as they were, gave rise to this question. Those Christians who had yielded under the terrors and pains of torture, denied the faith and sacrificed to idols, and afterwards repented and wished to return. Must they be rebaptized. The question was raised for the first time, and for the first time it had to be decided. Suppose this persecution had not arisen for five hundred years afterwards, and then have come up. Those opposed to rebaptizing could have said, "We have never rebaptized any one in the Church." The others could have answered, "True; but you never had such a case before. This is a new case now first occurring in the Church. And under the legitimate intention of the law regarding the sacrament of baptism, must they not be rebaptized? It is true, that the apostles never rebaptized anyone; but it is equally true, that they never refused to rebaptize any one. No one apostatized in their day, and afterwards offered to return to the Church. The case never arose in their day that could bring up this question."

Now the question in such a case regards the application of admitted principles to new cases — cases different in their circumstances. All conceded that Baptism was a sacrament. The only question was, could it be twice administered to the same person under the circumstances stated? And it was decided by the Church that rebaptizing was not required.

And so in regard to the Divinity of Christ. Until it was denied, and the question raised, no express decision was made by a Council.

In reference to this point St. Augustine says:

"The dogma of the Trinity was not perfectly brought out till the Arians declared against it; nor was penance

until attacked by the Novatians; nor the efficacy of Baptism, till questioned by rebaptizers.”

And I confess I could not see how it could be otherwise. As I have insisted in a preceding page, law, from its very nature, only lays down general principles, in general terms. It cannot, in advance, state all the facts and circumstances that go to make up each individual case.

Protestants, while they make this objection, seem sensible of its entire unreasonableness; and, in their own practice, act upon the principle themselves, though contrary to their fundamental rule. The late divisions in the Methodist body in the United States, into North and South, in consequence of the different views regarding slavery, may be mentioned as an illustration. I apprehend, that if no Methodist had ever been a slave owner, the question would not have been determined, as to whether slavery was a sin or not. They would have said: “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof; we will determine that question when it comes up.”

And when I came to look into the history of these definitions, I found most ample historical proofs to show their reason and necessity—that the statement made by the great St. Augustine, in reference to certain questions defined before or in his day, was true of the definitions made by the Church afterwards. These definitions were made as often as cases arose requiring them, and were only declaratory of the existing faith of the Church. And this was shown, not only from the express declaration of the decrees, in unison with the rule of the church, expressly recognized at all periods of her existence, that she only taught the doctrine which came down to her without interruption from the apostles, but it was affirmatively shown by the express testimonies of the Fathers, and historians of the Church,

written at various times, in countries widely separated from each other.

The statement made by Mr. Campbell, that "in the 9th century the doctrine of transubstantiation began to be talked of commonly, but was made infallible by Pope Innocent III, 4th Lateran Council," I found was not sustained by the facts of history. It was true that the 4th Lateran Council in 1215 first made the definition, and first used the word "transubstantiation," as best and most concisely expressing the faith of the Church; but it was equally true that this definition was brought about by the denial of the doctrine by Berengarius, and that it had been believed in all ages of the Church, as the testimonies of the Fathers abundantly show. So long as the words, "This is my body, This is my blood" were understood in their plain literal sense, it was wholly unnecessary to define the faith of the Church. When Christ says, "This is my body," it is obvious that these words, if taken literally in their plain sense, express the entire change of substance. And when these words, in the opinion of the Church, are misconstrued, other words must then be used to express the idea the Church decides is conveyed by the language of Christ. There are some words that can only be taken in one sense, and that sense is fixed and determinate; while other expressions may admit of different senses. If the Church finds her doctrines impugned by those who misconstrue the Scriptures, she is compelled, of necessity, to use other than the Scripture language (already misconstrued), otherwise her decrees would settle nothing. Those who had misconstrued the same language in the Scriptures, would again misconstrue the same language in the decrees, and insist that the Church had defined nothing, or that she had, in fact, confirmed their views. No single

term, perhaps, could be found, so definite and certain as the word "transubstantiation." The words "This is my body" express the same idea, if taken literally. For when one says "this is a certain thing," naming it, he does not mean to say, it also contains another and a different thing. By this form of expression he speaks of a single thing, and not of two or more things existing together. This single thing may be composed of separate parts, but cannot consist of two separate and distinct things, like bread and Christ's body.

The fact that a new name is given to a thing, under new circumstances, is not at all surprising, but is very common. It is very natural for men to seek a single word to express several ideas, when a frequent repetition is required, either in spoken or written language. This tendency of common sense towards common convenience was very fully shown in California, in 1848, the year the gold mines were discovered. At first, when a man went out to search for new gold mines, they said he had gone "to hunt for new gold diggings;" but as the same answer, from the new circumstances existing, had to be made so often, some one called the whole operation "prospecting," and the term at once passed into general use, and so continues. So, in theological controversy, it is matter of convenience, to use one term as expressive of several ideas: It is also proper in such cases, to use a term that is alone applicable to the particular case, as it is more certain. The use of these new terms is not the slightest evidence, that the thing itself has changed, any more than the fact, that the disciples were first called Chrisians, at Antioch, was evidence that they were different from what they had been.

The word Trinity nowhere occurs in the New Testament, and shall we hence conclude that the doctrine ex-

pressed by the term is not found therein? All such arguments are based upon a remarkably shallow foundation, though they are very often used. It must be conceded that names are not given to things, before the things have either a real or an imaginary existence. When a new doctrine is put forth, there can seldom be found a short known term to express it. The lawmaker to make himself understood, must, of necessity, do one of two things:

1. He must coin a new term, or take an old one, and in either case, He must define the sense in which He used the term.

2. Or, He must do the same thing in substance, by stating in full the particulars that make up the doctrine, leaving others to give it a short name.

To convey to the mind the doctrine of the Trinity, before that term was defined, a number of words was indispensable. After the doctrine is understood, convenience will force parties, even the cavillers themselves, to adopt a short term, expressive of all the ideas entering into and composing the thing understood.

The same subject further considered.

In reference to those charges against the uniformity of the Church, coming under the third division, being alleged contradictions in doctrine, Mr. Campbell gives several instances. In the first place he gives several alleged contradictions in the decrees of the Popes.

The first allegation is that "the Council of Constance says the Church in old times allowed the laity to partake of both kinds — the bread and the wine — in celebrating the Eucharist. The Council of Trent says the laity and unofficiating priests may commune in one kind only. Here then we have Council against Council. In the time

of Pope Gelasius it was pronounced to be sacrilege to deny the cup to the laity; but now it is uncanonical to allow it." (Debate C. & P., 179.)

The Church regards receiving in one or both kinds by the laity, as only matter of discipline—that it is not essential to the administration of the sacrament—that the command "drink ye all of it" was given to the apostles as consecrating priests—that Christ is equally present, whole and entire, in both species, and therefore equally received under both kinds.

The whole question resolves itself, as I understand it, into the doctrine of the Real Presence. If that doctrine be true, then it is clear that Christ is equally present and received under both species alike; since His blood can no more be shed, and separated from His body. In the early ages of the Church, it was most generally administered under both kinds; but even then it was frequently administered under only one kind. Tertullian, St. Dionysius of Alexandria, St. Cyprian, St. Basil, St. Chrysostom, and others, prove this to have been true. It has always, therefore, been regarded as only a matter of changeable discipline. Many Protestants as Bishop Forbes, White and Montague, of the English Church, not only admit the fact as to the ancient practice of the church, but acknowledge that the authority for giving under both kinds, is rather from tradition than from Scripture. So also Cassander and Grotius. In the Calvinistic Synod of Poitiers, in France, held in 1550, it was declared that "the bread of the Lord's supper ought to be administered to those who cannot drink wine." The Acts of Parliament, which established communion under both kinds, made it lawful to administer in one kind only, when required. (Com. H. & B., 351.)

Communion under both kinds was not introduced by

Luther, but by Carlostadius, while Luther was concealed. This was in 1521. Luther, in a letter he wrote on the reformation of Carlostadius, reproaches him "with having placed Christianity in things of no account — communicating under both kinds, taking the sacrament into the hand, abolishing confession, and burning images." (Bossuet's *Va. B. ii.*, Sec. 8-10.)

Receiving under one or both kinds, being a matter of changeable discipline dependent upon circumstances, in the days of St. Leo, the Manicheans were discovered by him, by their refraining from receiving the cup; and as they mixed with the Catholics, and had the liberty, as all had, to receive under one or both kinds as they preferred, it was exceedingly difficult to detect them. It was for the purpose of rendering them wholly distinguishable to the people, that an express requisition was made for all to receive in both kinds. By this means the Manicheans stood manifest. And to show that this discipline was not founded upon the necessity of always receiving under both kinds, St. Gelasius grounds it in formal terms on this basis, that those who refused the wine did it through a certain superstition. (*Va.*, Book xi., sec. 12.)

The statement of Mr. Campbell that "in the time of Pope Gelasius it was pronounced to be sacrilege to deny the cup to the laity," was founded upon the state of case above stated, and is not a fair and just statement of the matter of fact. For the Manichean to deny that the wine was the blood of Christ, was to contradict the words of Christ, "This is my blood," as always understood by the Church, and was a denial of the whole doctrine of the Real Presence. If they could deny that the wine was the blood, they could deny that the bread was the body of Christ. It was, therefore, heresy in them to refuse the wine for heretical reasons.

The last alleged contradiction in the faith of the Church, made by Mr. C., was in regard to the marriage of the clergy.

In reference to the celibacy of the clergy, I found that the Church never held it as a matter of faith — that she had always regarded it as a matter of discipline, resting in her discretion, and dependent upon circumstances — and that she held celibacy to be a more honorable state, which any one might, or might not voluntarily enter into, at his own will and pleasure. As I understand the views of the Church, upon this subject, she holds these distinct positions:

1. That marriage was a matter under the control of each individual.

2. That it was no sin to marry, and no sin to refrain from marriage.

3. That it was more honorable to refrain from marriage, when the motive was the greater service of God.

4. That individuals, male and female, had the clear right by a vow, voluntarily made, to dedicate themselves to the entire service of God.

5. That having made this deliberate engagement, they could not afterwards violate it without committing a grievous offence, by lying unto God, and His Church.

6. That the Church has the undoubted right to select her own ministers, and to judge of their qualifications.

7. That a body of clergy, who embrace celibacy, are more able to give their entire time and thoughts to their duties, and for that reason, are more devoted, more efficient, in proportion to numbers, and having no families to support, are more economical, and a less burthen to the Church.

8. That for these reasons, the Church prefers those

who pledge themselves to celibacy; and so long as she can find a number of such, sufficient for her ministry, she has the right to accept their services, in preference to those who are married.

9. That when she does so select an individual, with the pledge and distinct understanding, that he shall remain unmarried, that he is bound, by all the rules of Christianity, to perform his promises faithfully; and when he does not do so, she of right excludes him from her communion.

Whatever opinion may be entertained in reference to this discipline of the church, it is clear that there is no contradiction in her faith, and no violation of her infallibility. I could not find any proof that she had ever held, at any period of her existence, either the marriage or celibacy of the clergy, as a matter of faith. Nor could I find anything in the teaching of Christ, or of His apostles, that made celibacy a sin, or that made marriage obligatory upon individuals.

These several charges of a want of uniformity in the doctrines and teachings of the Catholic Church, wholly failed to satisfy my mind that they were based upon any satisfactory foundation. The great and striking fact, that the church had existed for so many centuries — had passed through so many vicissitudes — and yet, after all, had been so uniform in teaching all that she herself ever held as essential faith, was calculated to make the most serious impression upon the mind of the patient and fair inquirer. For to my mind it did show, that she was the most successful counterfeit of the genuine coin, that ever did exist, if she were not the true coin itself. It is so difficult always to wear a mask — so difficult to wear it consistently — and for so many ages. How could this be? Her history was wonderful — her success most

unaccountable. In the absence of infallibility, who can account for it? What reasonable hypothesis can be given?

I found that at present her faith was taught in every land, among every people — that she had the same creed for the rude Indian, the imaginative Asiatic, the dark African, the enlightened European, and the practical American — that between the frigid zones of the North and South, and around the whole world, she had only the same sacraments — the same priesthood — and the same liturgical services — and the same creed of faith. In short, I found her ministers in every nook and corner of the accessible earth, and her missionaries in every sea. Here in California, where the varied races of the earth do congregate, where more languages are spoken, than were found in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, we find men of all classes, kindreds, nations, and tongues, meet around the same altar, partake of the same sacraments, and though unknown to each other, save by the golden chain of faith, are each and all perfectly at home, in the same house of the Lord. Is not this as it should be? Is not this union? Apostolic Union? If not, where, O! where, can it be found?

CHAPTER VIII

AN OBJECTION ANSWERED.

Is the Catholic Rule impracticable?

The Council of Trent, at its fourth session, decreed, "that no one relying on his own skill, shall — in matters of faith or morals, pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine — wresting the sacred Scriptures to his own senses, presume to interpret the said sacred Scriptures contrary to the sense which holy Mother Church, — whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures,— hath held and doth hold; or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers."

Mr. Campbell says: "Our rule is the Bible alone. The Roman Catholic rule contains one hundred and thirty-five large folio volumes superadded to the Bible, and the Apocrypha." (Debate C. & P., 168.) These, he states, consists of Fathers, 35 Vols.; Decretals, 8; Bulls of the Popes, 10; Decrees of Councils, 31; Acts of Saints, 51 — in all 135.

Afterwards he says: "But the priesthood are sworn 'to interpret the Scriptures according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.' . . . But how can they unless they examine all these Fathers? And what living man has read these 135 folios with or without much care? . . . Here is a task which I say never was, or can be performed by man." (Debate C. & P., 181.)

Again he says: "The Roman Catholic rule is exceedingly unwieldy. It requires a whole council to move it, and apply it to a simple opinion. Ours is at least portable." (Debate C. & P., 168.)

The first matter that arrested my attention was a misconstruction of the decree. It will be seen that the decree is negative — that no one, relying upon his own skill, shall presume to construe the Scripture contrary to the Church, or to the unanimous consent of the Fathers. If, then, a member of the Church construe contrary to the Church, or to this unanimous consent, then he violates the decree, and only then. But Protestant controversialists have taken the ground, that under it, no article of faith can be defined, unless there be a unanimous consent of the Fathers in support of it. If, therefore, they say, one single Father is found dissenting from all the others, the Church cannot define that an article of faith, without a violation of this decree.

But I must confess in all candor, I could not see "whereunto this would grow." If ninety-nine Fathers state one thing to have been the faith of the Church, and one state the contrary, and that in relation to a matter not expressly defined by the Church, and a member construe with the ninety-nine, and against the one, he is clearly not guilty of any violation of the decree. In case the Church has defined at all, then he must not contradict her decree. This is the first negative. In case she has not defined then the member must not contradict the unanimous consent of the Fathers. Both these negatives are confined to faith and morals.

If we take the decree in its strict grammatical sense, as Protestants assume to take it, it is only by a misconstruction, that they can deduce the consequences they claim to flow from it. The decree does not say, that

the Church shall not define an article of faith, because a few Fathers may dissent from the overwhelming majority of all, if such a case should exist. Nor does the decree say that individuals shall not construe contrary to the sense of the few, and with the sense of the majority of the Fathers. The decree in its terms, relates to individuals, and not to the Church.

If, on the contrary, we give the decree a more liberal construction, and say that the word "unanimous" must be controlled by the general scope and context, and is equivalent to the expression "general consent," then no such consequences would follow, as contended. In either case, nothing but a misconstruction can lead to the consequences mentioned.

In reference, then, to the 135 volumes enumerated by Mr. Campbell, and the duty of the Priesthood to interpret the Scriptures, as well as tradition, according to these, Mr. C. thinks there is very great difficulty, and insists that no man ever did or can read these volumes, "with or without much care." It did not seem to me to be an impossible task. Most lawyers, in the course of their practice, read more volumes than these 135. There are very few law libraries, that do not contain more than this number. And why a carefully educated priest could not, in the course of a few years, read these volumes, I could not see.

But while it may be necessary to the Church controvertist to have read all contained in the 35 volumes of the Fathers in reference to disputed points, and also all that refers to the same matters in the Decretals, and the other volumes, it is not necessary for every priest to have read them all, in order to know the faith of his church, so that he may know what to teach.

It must be obvious to any man of good sense, that the

larger portions of these volumes, from the nature of the case, must relate to matters once discussed, but long since defined by the Church. The decrees of the Council of Trent, for instance, embrace much the larger portion of the questions discussed in the Fathers. These decrees, with the reasons for them, make a volume about as large as the New Testament. With the aid of proper indexes, it is just as easy to find the portions applicable to any particular point, as it is for a lawyer to consult his library, often consisting of several hundred volumes. Besides, there are compilations of the principal matters contained in the Fathers. For example, there is the one of Messrs. Berrington and Kirk of three volumes, so well arranged and indexed, that in a few minutes' search all of importance relating to any particular point, now in question, can be found. These 135 volumes are intended for reference, like the numerous volumes of reports in a law library. If a student of law could be alarmed at the number of volumes in any respectable law library, he would at once conclude that to be a lawyer, was a task "which never was, or can be performed."

But to say any one who has any knowledge of method and system, and how much labor of search can be abridged by them, such an argument seems like one addressed to ignorance, and ought not to be found in the mouth of an educated man. By the aid of a beautiful arrangement, we can turn to Webster's large dictionary, and out of some thirty-five thousand words, we can select any one we wish, and find its definition, in a single moment of time.

But one reflection arises in reference to Mr. C. himself. In his debates and other productions, he has referred to, and quoted from, a much greater number of volumes than these 135, and no one can tell from the

manner in which the quotations were made, whether he has read these works or not. It would at first seem that he had. But we have a right to suppose that he has relied upon the labor of others. Now why Mr. C. will not allow the Catholic clergy to avail themselves of the labors of each other, when they are all authorized teachers in the same Church, and all equally responsible, it is difficult to tell.

A lawyer, with a library containing a thousand volumes, will be able, by the aid of his alphabetically arranged Digests and Indexes, to give you the authorities upon a certain point of law, in a very short time. All professional men avail themselves of the labors of each other.

And when I looked into the Protestant rule, I found the case, as regarded myself, as still worse. That theory told me to trust nobody; and yet necessity, stronger than this rule, told me I must. Under the Catholic rule I was allowed to take the true construction of the entire law, written and unwritten, from the authorized teachers of the Church. The labor was thrown upon the clergy, a carefully and thoroughly educated class of men. I was allowed to have confidence in some one. But under the Protestant theory, I was not allowed to do so, without a palpable violation of the fundamental rule itself. If I took anything upon trust, I gave up, so far, my right and duty. God had made my mind the only tribunal for the construction of His word, according to this theory. This word was originally written in a few different languages. It was my duty not to trust the judgment of any other person as to the meaning of this Word. If I took the translations of others, I departed from the theory. I knew translation must come before my private construction. It seemed that the translator

had to construe both languages. And as I found so great a discrepancy in the translation, showing great ignorance or unfairness in the translator, or imperfection in the languages, or all together (and of which I was not competent to judge), I could not trust them, or any of them. Still I found that "without faith it was impossible to please God." In the Catholic version I had found, "Hail Mary full of grace," and in the Protestant, "Hail thou that art highly favored," conveying to the mind very different ideas. This is only one of many instances. Who was right? There was great error somewhere. Mr. Campbell declared that the "faults and imperfections of the common version, were neither few nor small." (Debate C. & R., 160.) True, I was assured by most Protestants, that the different translations were substantially the same, in reference to all material matters. But in all the discussions I read between Catholics and Protestants, and between Protestants themselves, I found much disagreement as to the fidelity of translations, and much discussion about these differences. These parties considered them material. I could not determine whether they were correct or not, from any knowledge I had of the original languages. All I could certainly say was, that they were very different. And if I took the statements made on other occasions, that they were substantially similar, contrary to my own judgment, that they were substantially very different, I would be taking the matter on trust, just like a Catholic.

Admitting I could find a translation that I knew was correct, it had to be construed. This, at first, would seem to be an easy task. Mr. Campbell, Mr. Rice, Mr. Breckenridge, Dr. Spring, and others say so. Still, after all that they could say and had said, in regard to the Bible being a plain book and easily understood, I found,

either that they were not men of plain good sense, else they would not have differed so widely from each other, or there was more difficulty in the construction of this wonderful volume than they seemed to understand themselves. And I found Mr. Campbell (whatever might be his abstract declarations) "eternally" acting as if he did not think the Bible so plain, and as if he was well satisfied that he could make it plainer; for, in his efforts to do this, he had written, spoken, and published matter enough to make many large volumes; not as many, however, as the 135, but certainly approaching somewhat towards the 35 volumes of the Fathers. All of which he thought useful to be read. And as for other Protestant writers they were equally convinced, that they could improve upon the plainness of the Bible. So certain were they of that fact, that the different sects had actually drawn up written creeds, much plainer than the Bible. Mr. Rice himself stated it as a matter of "fact; viz.: it is impossible to know anything of a man's faith, from the mere fact of his saying that he takes the Bible alone as his infallible guide." (Deb. C. & R., 774.)

In my reflections upon this subject, I could not but reason in this way: "This is a singular case; a very anomalous state of things. Christ was the most important lawgiver, and promulgated the most extensive code in the world; for it embraces more matter, and more people, than any other. Yet it is solemnly alleged by one party, that this Infinite Lawgiver made no provision for any certain and authorized translations and construction of His law. He left all in perfect chaos, if chaos can be perfect. He made each one dependent upon Himself (for a supreme cannot be dependent), and yet He placed him in such a position, that inexorable necessity would force each man to rely upon the equally uncertain and

contradictory translations of different parties, or choose between them, without any guide or qualification. The sense of the most important passage, might depend entirely upon the proper translation of a single word. Was there ever so strange a system? Did a lawgiver ever promulgate a code, and organize no association to be governed by it? If he did so, did he not do a very idle thing? And if he did thus organize any association, was there ever a case where he left no tribunal to construe his law? Was there, in short, such a strange anomaly as a lawgiver ever promulgating a code of law, that had no system in it? no consistency? no efficiency? And does not this theory make Christ the weakest, the most confused and incompetent of all lawgivers? What beauty, system, harmony, unity or certainty, is there in a theory, founded and based in suspicion and distrust of everybody but yourself? And it does seem to me that the Catholic theory honors Christ as a lawgiver, while the Protestant theory degrades Him, as such, below the standard of mere human legislators.

The same matter further considered.

But Mr. Campbell says:

"It requires a whole council to move it (the Catholic rule) and apply it to a single opinion." . . . "Ought there not to be a general council eternally in session?" (Deb. C. & P., 168.)

This objection, I found, upon investigation, to be based upon an erroneous conception of the practical operation of the Catholic system.

Every Catholic Priest is a subordinate organ of the Church. They are carefully educated and instructed in her doctrine. They undergo a rigid examination before they are ordained. They are immediately responsible,

each to His Bishop, and each bishop to the Pope. From the decision of the parish priest, an appeal lies to the bishop, and from the bishop to the Pope. These are the ordinary organs of the Church.

In the nature of all governments over men, under any system of law practically administered, difficulties must arise, as I have elsewhere stated, in the application of its principles to new cases; and these new cases will arise, at intervals, so long as the government exists, but with diminished frequency. This must be the general rule, to which there may be exceptions, caused by particular circumstances. It may happen indeed that a great number of new questions may be raised at the same time, and that at a remote period from the origin of the government. This was the case at the Reformation.

It is obvious that when a question is once determined by the Church, that it is not necessary to call a general Council to reaffirm it. It may be advisable, in reference to particular cases, when the Council is assembled for other purposes, for the Council to do so, in terms still more explicit.

But under the Catholic theory, a general council can only be required for the purpose of applying the principles of the law to new cases which come up, and about which there may exist some doubt in the minds of some members of the college of teachers. In regard to the question determined in the Council of Jerusalem, the difference of opinion arose among the teachers. Hence the necessity of that Council. The result was harmony of sentiment, and unity of effort. The object of calling general Councils is still the same.

For these reasons general councils are not called except some great question or questions require them to be convened. After the commencement of the Reforma-

tion, the Council of Trent was convoked. This Council went extensively into the various questions raised by the reformers; and the result of its labors has been to settle, so far as Catholics are concerned, all the material points involved in the controversy. Since that period no occasion has arisen that called for the convoking of a general Council, in the judgment of the Church.

In the Constitution of the United States it is first provided that the "executive power shall be vested in a President;" and yet, in the second section of the same article, the President "may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments." These "executive departments" are but part and parcel of the executive power, which is all placed in "a President." So it is in the Catholic Church. The Pope has the right to control all bishops, priests, and deacons, and he has the right, therefore, to employ the aid of particular agents for that purpose. When the duties of an executive become too arduous for him to perform alone, he has the right to employ assistants, who only act as his immediate subordinates. The Pope, therefore, employs the aid of an Archbishop or Metropolitan, to supervise the Bishops within certain limits; and Cardinals are employed to aid him by their counsel and advice. As our President has the right to take the opinion of the heads of departments, so the Pope has the right to take the advice of all bishops, Archbishops, Metropolitans and Cardinals. The College of Cardinals is the most accessible advisory body, because many of the members reside at Rome, and are easily assembled. This right of the Pope is an incident inseparable from all executive power. No executive power over any considerable body of men could be practically exercised

without it. Almost every officer, under any system, has the right to appoint deputies.

Mr. C., speaking of the Protestant rule of faith, says: "Ours is at least portable."

As I understand him, he means to say that it is much easier to read and understand the Bible alone, than to understand it with the aid of these 135 volumes. In other words I understand Mr. C. to take the ground that other Protestants take, that it is easier to get at the correct construction of the Bible without, than with, any external exposition, aid or assistance.

It must be conceded that a code of law may be too concise, or it may be too prolix. So may a discourse, or a dissertation. The true medium is difficult to attain. He who expresses the greatest number of relevant thoughts, upon a given subject, with precision and certainty, and in the fewest words, has attained the medium.

In regard to laws, every judge and lawyer knows that the most difficult statutes to construe are those that are the most concise, and, therefore, expressed in most general terms. Broad principles are often laid down, embracing such a wide and varied number of cases, that it becomes a very difficult matter to apply these general principles to such a multitude of individual cases. Had the statute been more full and explicit, its construction would have been more easy. In short, whoever reflects upon this subject carefully and impartially will, I think, arrive at these conclusions; that every system of law must embrace all cases that need practical regulation, or it must be defective in permitting injustice to exist without a remedy — that this regulation can be effected in one of three ways: 1. By the adoption of a very concise code, expressed in general terms, and embracing

only general principles. 2. By the adoption of a very full and minute code, dealing more in details. 3. By the adoption of a mixed code, containing general principles, and also minute regulations. In all these cases it is assumed that the codes are consistent in their principles one with another. The mixed system is ours, both with reference to the Federal and State governments.

The Constitution of the United States is a very short instrument, and can be read in half an hour. One would suppose that its construction would be very easy, if there be anything in brevity to make it so. Yet how many great men have exhausted their powers of construction upon the concise fundamental law. Has there been no difficulty in this case? Is the proper construction of that instrument most certainly attained by reading it alone? Or by taking the decisions of our Courts, the opinions of our Jurists, and statesmen, together with the instrument itself?

Suppose a lawyer, in addressing the Supreme Court, should use this language: "May it please the Court. In this case there is involved a very great Constitutional question, upon which the whole case will turn. In preparing myself to argue this point, and in giving advice to my client, I have only read and studied the Constitution itself. I preferred to go to the law itself to know what were the rights of my client. I preferred to go to the pure fountain head, and from that uncorrupted source, to drink in the clear waters of constitutional construction. I have not consulted at any time, either the voluminous decisions of this court, or of the State courts, nor have I ever read one word of what Story, Kent, Seargent, and other voluminous writers have said upon this subject. I preferred the shorter course, to look

alone to the Constitution itself. I have read it over a number of times in a day. To read Story on the Constitution only once would have taken me several days. And to read the decisions of this Court, would have taken a much longer time."

By the Court.—"The Court dislikes to interrupt any gentleman, but we hope you will proceed to the point at once. How you prepared yourself, or how you obtained your views of the Constitution, is not important. Lawyers prepare themselves as they please."

Lawyer.—"If the Court please, I will then come to the point at once. There are several Acts of Congress, the first passed as early as July 31, 1789, and others at different periods as late as 1799, giving to the United States priority of payment over private creditors in cases of insolvency, and in the distribution of the estates of deceased debtors. Now I hold that all these acts are unconstitutional."

By the Court.—"This Court cannot hear argument upon that question. It has been settled by repeated adjudications. The Court regrets to be compelled to stop an able argument, but the question has already been argued by able men, and decided. Had you examined these arguments and decisions, you would have saved both yourself and your client. If there was no difficulty in the construction of the Constitution, or if there was but one distinguished man, and this court had made no decisions, it might be well for this distinguished man to confine his attention alone to the Constitution. But the case is different. Besides, the Court cannot see any necessity of hearing argument, if your position be correct; for this court would scarcely learn anything from you if it be true that you could learn nothing from others."

And is not this reasoning applicable to the Church?

The whole question as I conceive, resolves itself into this, and this only: Was Christ a lawgiver, and is there any Church? For if there be a church, there must be government in it. And if there be government in the Church, there must, of necessity, exist the executive and judicial powers. And if these powers exist in the Church, they must be supreme, and her decisions are, and of right ought to be, final and conclusive. And if her jurisdiction extend to any part of the law, it must embrace all questions arising under it that require to be determined in this mode of existence. And if these positions be true, then it is important to know what the Church has decided.

And it must be obvious that the number and character of the decisions of any tribunal must be increased by certain circumstances: 1. By the concise character of the code. 2. By the extent and variety of the subjects embraced in it. 3. By the length of its duration. The conciseness of the New Testament has been one of the main causes of the difference among Protestants. But this conciseness occasions no difficulty under the Catholic rule. The decisions of the Church extend the general principles to all new cases as they arise. And whereas the Protestant rule leaves every difficulty without any certain remedy, the Catholic rule provides an efficient remedy for every difficulty. The most defective governments in the world are those which provide no sufficient remedy for wrongs — no corrective for errors. And in proportion as proposed remedies are inefficient, so in proportion does the government approach the most unhappy of all conditions — anarchy.

When we go from the officers of the Church to the laity, the Catholic system is far more simple, certain and practical, than the Protestant rule. The inquirer, under

both rules, must first be satisfied that Christianity is true. Having reached that conclusion, under the Catholic rule, the inquirer has only two points to determine; namely: 1. Which is the true Church? 2. Is he bound to hear her? When he has decided these, all others follow as logical consequences. Not so with the Protestant. He must, under his rule, arrive by his individual examination at all the truths of the Scripture necessary to be believed. The Protestant travels the whole journey alone; while the Catholic finds his guide, and follows her.

The real difference in the fundamental rule is this: When the inquirer receives the Catholic rule as true, his labor is at an end. He has only to follow his guide. But when he receives the Protestant rule as true, his labor is but fairly begun.

And while all who admit the Catholic rule must come into the unity of the faith and the bond of peace, it is precisely different with the Protestant. The practical result has been that the Catholic rule has kept in unity the overwhelming majority of professed Christians; while the Protestant rule has severed and divided those who held it into many discordant sects. One rule must lead to unity, the other to division. It is the great beauty of the Catholic fundamental rule, that unity must follow a concession of its truth, and that division cannot exist, until this fundamental truth is denied.

Another objection which I found made by all Protestant controvertists was this, to use the confident language of Mr. Breckenridge: "But when you have got the decrees, confessions, bulls, etc., of this infallible judge, are they better or more clear than our Bible? Can your judge be more lucid than our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ? And after you have got these infallible judg-

ments, do they not also need an interpreter as much as the Bible?" (Con. H. & B., 13.)

I have already given my reasons why a lawgiver, however competent, could not make a law, in advance, as plain in each particular case, as could a judicial tribunal, possessing the same capacity, after the particular case had arisen. Were a lawyer to use such an objection in reference to the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States upon the construction of the Constitution he would be considered as quite green; and so evident would be his verdancy, that he would be set down as knowing very little of common sense, and less of his profession.

What is very remarkable, is the fact that Mr. B. belonged to a Church that had a creed, considered by her as more plain than the Bible, or else there was no sense in making it. If the creed could not give a more definite and certain exposition of the faith of Presbyterians than the Bible, surely better not refine upon that which is already as plain as possible. Conceding the plainness of the Bible, it is exceedingly difficult to put the two positions together, except upon the ground that the creed and the Bible, though both equally plain, expressed very different things.

It is true that decrees and bulls need construction; but, being decisions upon particular points after they arise, and made with a single eye to them, they are, as a general thing, as easily understood as the decrees of the Council of Jerusalem. And when there is any difficulty in any case, there is always a living, speaking, and accessible tribunal to explain these decrees, until they are understood. Decisions of courts are sometimes misconstrued. In such cases the court can set the matter right. The Church is always as able to construe her decrees as

she is to make them. Her living organs have always this right. And in the very few cases where any difficulty occurs among Catholics, it is easily adjusted.

The vicious circle.

I come now to examine an objection made originally, as Dr. Milner says, by Dr. Stillingfleet, and repeated in all the Protestant works I have read. It is so much esteemed by Protestant writers, that Dr. Watts, in his treatise on logic, thus states it:

“A vicious circle is when two propositions, equally uncertain, are used to prove each other. Thus Papists prove the authority of the Scriptures by the infallibility of their church, and then prove the infallibility of their church from the authority of the Scriptures.”

Some illustrate this definition by saying, “this is like John giving a character to Thomas, and Thomas a character to John.”

When I first read this position, it seemed to strike me as expressed with the smoothness and sententious brevity of a mere catch. And my subsequent reflections satisfied me that it was so. As the objection is so much relied upon, it will require more examination.

The essence of this objection regards the competency of witnesses, and not propositions of logic, because it consists in the rejection of testimony however credible and numerous the witnesses, *simply* upon the ground that it is mutual. And, therefore, if John give Thomas, and he give John, a good character, their testimony must be rejected, though they both, being good men, did swear the truth. And if John the Baptist gave testimony of Christ, and Christ of him, their testimony must be excluded, because they both gave each other good characters. And if I have two good honest neighbors, who

give each other good characters, because they could not do otherwise and tell the truth, I must discard their statements as false, simply because two good men happen to know each other, and tell the truth accordingly.

Had Mr. Starkie or Mr. Greenleaf, in their profound treatises upon the law of evidence, or if our courts of justice had laid down a rule so arbitrary and sweeping, regarding the competency of witnesses, the consequences of such a rule would be very speedily tested. Under it two good men never could testify for each other, although the knowledge of the facts rested alone with them. The *mere fact* that two good men give each other good reputations, is not the slightest evidence to show that the testimony is false. And the fact that two men testify for each other, in different cases, in reference to different matters, is no evidence that the witnesses are unworthy of credit. To discredit the witnesses, you must show a fraudulent combination to testify for each other. The proof of this when made out from the admissions, conduct, and character of the witnesses, will destroy their testimony. But if the witnesses be otherwise worthy of belief, the circumstances of their mutually testifying for each other will not destroy their testimony. When the apostles, by their own testimony, proved the miracles and resurrection of Christ, and then, by His declarations, proved the truth of the religion they preached, did this destroy their testimony? Surely not. All depended upon the credibility of the witnesses.

But weak as this objection appeared to me, when applied to single witnesses, it was still weaker when applied to associated bodies of men. Who keeps the records of a nation but the government of that nation? To whom will you apply for correct copies of our Constitution, but to our own government?

I find apprehended to Hickey's copy of the Constitution of the United States, a fac-simile of the certificate of the Secretary of State, in these words:

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE, July 20th, 1845.

"This edition of the Constitution and amendments has been critically compared with the original in this department, and found to be correct in text, letter, and punctuation. It may, therefore, be relied upon as a standard edition. (The small figures designating the clauses are not in the original, and are added merely for convenience of reference.)

"JAMES BUCHANAN,

"Secretary of State.

"By the Secretary,

"N. P. TRIST, *Chief Clerk.*"

The government itself was made the depository of the Constitution, and through its own officers, gives its own testimony as to the existence of the original, and the correctness of the copy; and then, by the instrument itself, proves the extent and character of its own powers. Here we have the vicious circle complete; though I suppose the distinguished Secretary of State did not perceive the very singular fact, that in following the Universal practice of all governmental institutions, he was violating a rule of logic, solemnly laid down as such, by the acute Dr. Watts. What would the argument drawn from this imaginary vicious circle be worth, in the estimation of an enlightened Court?

When you want authentic copies of the decisions of the Supreme Court, will you apply to strangers, or to the clerk who keeps the records of the Court? If you wish to get at the true decision of a Court, will you not go to its own records, kept by itself? And why can we trust Courts, not only to keep their own records, but to certify that they are true, and have been faithfully kept?

The reason why all associated bodies of men, as well as all courts and legislative bodies, must be trusted, is because they have the knowledge of the facts — have no interest to distort them, for they are presumed to act conscientiously, and are composed of so many different individuals cognizant of the same facts, and belonging to the same body, that there is a security against mistake and fraud not always found in the case of single persons. Until all the members of such an association (knowing the facts) can be either corrupted or deceived a falsehood cannot be put upon the record and kept there. We are compelled to place confidence somewhere; and if we cannot trust associated bodies of men, public tribunals, and legislative bodies, to keep their own records, and prove their genuineness, whom can we trust? If there be any better security or testimony, I cannot conceive where it can be found among men. And until some wise person shall suggest better evidence, we must follow that sensible rule of law, and take the best the case allows.

And so it is with the Church. Christ committed His law to her. He would hardly have committed it to His enemies, to aliens, and strangers. This would have been a very idle act. The law, then, being committed to the Church, to whom can we apply for correct copies of the law but to her? She has the custody, she knows the facts. Shall we go to enemies of the Church for authentic copies of a law they always hated and opposed? Shall we ask them to prove facts of which they know nothing, and whose existence they deny? Who can be a credible and able witness of the facts but the party, who knows them?

If we can trust civil governments, legislative bodies, and judicial tribunals, why can we not trust the institu-

tion of Christ? Did He do His work so badly that His Church is the poorest, and most unreliable of all institutions? Surely, if Christ committed His word to the Church, by that very act He did endorse her veracity, and we are bound to believe her. And it was one of the most weighty reasons for organizing a visible and infallible Church, that our Lord might commit His law to her keeping.

Is there the slightest reason for invalidating her testimony, because in the Written Word we find a portion of the proofs that she is the infallible Church? Where should we find those proofs, but in part, in this Word? Suppose the proposition to be true, for the sake of the argument only, that Christ did organize an infallible Church, and that He did commit His law to her keeping, to whom can we apply but to her? She alone had the custody — she alone knows the facts. If we must get the Scriptures from the true Church (and where else in God's name, can we expect to find them?) shall we reject all the testimony of these Scriptures as to the true Church? The moment we concede that an infallible Church is possible, we cannot, by an arbitrary rule of false logic, reject proper testimony to prove the fact. How then can true copies of the Scriptures be proven, and the true Church ascertained, but by the very method adopted by the Catholic Church? Whether she be the true Church or not, must not the true Church act as she does? Could the true Church do otherwise? And until some wise wit will show us a more able and reliable witness than the true Church of Christ; as to facts peculiarly within her own knowledge, we must, with all due deference, believe her.

I could not see how the Protestant theory avoided the supposed difficulty of the vicious circle, when they

wished to prove the authenticity of the Scriptures, and which was the true Church, or any other fact relating to the Church. Though Dr. Spring used this vicious circle as an argument against the Catholic Church, he very unwittingly made admissions that completely neutralized his argument. He first tells us, in speaking of the New Testament Scriptures that copies of them were circulated and compared with the originals, until the evidence was satisfactory to the churches that they were both authentic and genuine." (Dissertation 27.)

All these acts were done in the churches, the sufficiency of the evidence was decided by them, and by whom then can we prove the authenticity and genuineness of those copies but by the Church? In reference to the origin of the Scriptures he says: "The divine origin of the sacred books is not proved simply, nor principally, from historical testimony. Historical testimony has its place, and it is no unimportant place in the argument." (Dis. 28.) The learned divine having referred us to the Church for proof of the divine origin of the sacred books, so far as the important part of historical testimony is concerned, how does he propose to ascertain this Church, HIS WITNESS to prove the authenticity and genuineness of these Scriptures? He insists it must be proved by the Scriptures alone.

Can the Church decide her own cases?

Another objection is made, based essentially upon a gross misapplication of a principle only applicable to individuals, and not to associations of men. I will state it in the language of Mr. Campbell:

"In all monarchies, save that of Rome and Mahomet, a judge is not constitutionally a judge of his own case. But the Roman judge of controversy is the whole church,

says my learned opponent, and her councils affirm with him. The whole church judging them between what parties? Herself and the heretics!! What a righteous, and infallible, and republican judge, is the supreme judge of controversy in the Catholic Church! The controversy is between two parties — the Church or the clergy on one side, and the heretics or the reformers on the other, as they may happen to be called; say the church and heretics. And who is umpire and who is supreme judge of both? One of the parties, indeed, the church herself! This is the archetype — the beau ideal of civil liberty, and republican government in the Supreme Roman hierarchy.” (Debate C. & P., 280.)

This objection was originally made by the early reformers, as also by the Remonstrants at the Synod of Dort. I find it also in most Protestant Controvertists.

From the very emphatic and pointed language of Mr. Campbell, and the extreme emphasis he puts upon the case, he must have considered it a most unheard of usurpation for a state, sovereignty, or church, to judge in her own case.

It is true, that the laws of all civilized countries lay down the principles, that a man cannot be a judge in his own case. But from all my reading, and from all my intercourse with intelligent men, I never knew that this principle, intended only for individuals, could be applied to states, or churches, or to any other associated bodies of men, until I read Mr. Campbell. A father, by the laws of all countries, is allowed to decide between himself and his child, as to any disobedience of his commands. And a State, Church, or association, bears the same relation to those under its jurisdiction. The right to decide its own cases, I had always supposed, was an attribute of supremacy, inherent in the very nature of

every society. Every criminal offence is committed against the peace and dignity of the State—is prosecuted in her name—is determined by courts of her own creation, and composed by judges appointed and paid by herself, and who act only as her agents. And yet is this tyranny? Because an individual, when he has an adverse interest against another, is not allowed to decide in his own case, is there the semblance of reason to say, that the State is not an impartial judge in her own cases? What interest has the State in convicting an innocent man? Is she not the equal protector of all? Can she ask anything but what is just? Is it not derogatory to her dignity, and to the people whom she governs for her to oppress the poorest or meanest of her citizens? It certainly is, in the contemplation of the theory whereon all government is based. As a father is compelled in justice to his family, to inflict punishment, so, the State is compelled to execute justice upon individuals.

And is it not so with the Church? And is it not so in all associations of men? What interest has the Church in unjustly expelling a member?

And what sort of a true Church would that be, that was so more defective than the constitution of any civil state—that possessed so little dignity and impartiality—was entitled to so little respect—was so feeble that there were “none so poor to do her reverence”—so that she must depend upon aliens, strangers, and heretics to determine her own faith—to decide for her own children? I cannot, I must confess, form a conception of such a Church, any more than I could of a sovereignty, calling in the citizens or subjects of other States to judge her own people.

I could find no Protestant sect that did not, at least in form, act upon this same condemned principle. The Synod of Dort took the responsibility to try to excommunicate the Remonstrants, against their protest. So, the Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and all others, so far as they pretend to exercise governmental power at all, even in mere form, assume and act upon this principle, and never call for outside help. Even in Mr. Campbell's church, it was so. For each individual church, "with its bishops and deacons, is the highest tribunal on earth to which an individual Christian can appeal; that whosoever will not hear it, has no other tribunal to which he can look for redress." "We know whom to exclude." "Such a one has denied the faith, and we reject him." (Christianity restored, 122, 123. Cited C. & R.'s Debate, 804.)

This looks very much, I must say, exactly like trying its own cases by each individual church.

The Church incapable of reformation.

I found it also objected to the Catholic Church, that she was incapable of reformation. In the language of Mr. Breckenridge:

"The very assumption of infallibility, while persisted in, renders all essential reform inconsistent and absurd; unnecessary and impossible. Hence the corruptions of the church of Rome in doctrine, morals and essential worship, have been perpetuated from age to age." (Con. H. & B., 224.)

This objection is also made by Mr. Campbell, and by most Protestant writers. It seems to be considered by them generally, as a very strong argument.

It is very natural that Protestants and Catholics should

differ about the character of the true church. Their fundamental rules lead to very different results. While the Catholic rule makes the Church always the same, "UNREFORMED AND UNREFORMABLE BOTH NOW AND FOREVER," (as Mr. Breckenridge declares), the Protestant rule, on the contrary, makes her the precise opposite, REFORMED AND REFORMABLE, "both now and forever." One begins and ends with a fixedness and certainty—the other begins and ends with inquiry and doubt.

I must confess that I love permanency and stability in all institutions. I never found truth to waver. I found change marked upon the face of error, but I never found it labelled upon the brow of truth. Before I became a Catholic, and before I had made any investigation into the truth of that system, I remember to have been told, in substance, by an eminent Protestant, that he thought the stability of the Roman Catholic Church, was her most admirable feature. It struck me, at the time, as one of the most sensible positions I had heard. It was evidently based upon sound sense, and pure philosophy.

And in my after investigations, among the truths I thought I could find in the New Testament was the explicit fact, that the true Church was not to change. I could not conceive of a changeable Church, and have any confidence in the promises of Christ. And besides, it did seem to me as just to mankind, that the same true Church, "unreformed and unreformable, both now and forever," should exist in every age, that all might enjoy the same opportunities for heaven. I could not see any object in the organization of a reformable church. It could guide no one.

Whatever system Christ did establish, He intended it to last through all coming time. It was not designed

to meet the whims of men — the prevailing temper of the times — or to excuse the errors of heretics. Christ being infinite, the map of the future lay before Him, as evident as that of the past; and He adopted a system applicable to all times, all places, and all persons, and yet inflexible and unchangeable. His system when extended through all future ages, and legitimately carried out, would save more men in the end, than an uncertain, flexible, and changeable theory, which, upon its very face, was suspicious, from the fact, that it claimed nothing, and asked for no respect. If Christ organized any Church, no man has any right to set up another. And if he does so, his act is void.

When we reflect upon the fact, expressly declared by our Lord, and shown in all the Epistles, and admitted by Protestants and proved by common sense, that the SUCCESS of His system depended upon the unity of His FOLLOWERS, and that all Christians did join this one Church in the days of the apostles, we can then see the great END Christ had in view in organizing ONE VISIBLE CHURCH. If the success of His system had not required the united faith and efforts of His followers, there would have been no reason for the existence of this one Kingdom. The Christian army is like any other army. Its success upon the field of battle depends upon its unity. It must act like one man, ready, able and willing to face a foe from any quarter, at any moment.

Because Christ knew that the success of His system depended upon the unity of His followers, He organized His Church, and gave it most magnificent promises of protection; and imposed upon men the corresponding duty to hear this Church, and of becoming members of this one fold. And having this glorious end in view,

was it not just as reasonable that He should require all men to hear this Church, and believe in this Church, as to believe any other truth He proposed?

I must say that I love a Church that claims to be the sole true Church. She acts like the true Church. It is the kind of Church we read of. She, at least, makes a consistent, rational, and Scriptural case, in her declaration. Upon the face of the papers, she makes out a good showing; not a wild and incoherent, mixed and multifarious claim, that contains so many inconsistencies, that new ones start up in every line. But when a Church comes to me and says: "I glory in having reformed my creed, and in being always reformable;" I cannot but say: "You will, perhaps, always need it." Constitutional infirmities are never cured. They 'lead but to the grave.' I can well understand how the members of the true church could reform themselves in their own conduct. But how the work of our Lord — the Church herself — could be reformed, I cannot conceive.

"I know you are liberal. You admit salvation can be found in a great variety of Churches. But is it, in fact and truth, salvation? Is it that priceless jewel? Are you sure of it? From the very fact that you are so willing to compromise, and admit that salvation can be found even in the alleged Church of anti-christ, I fear your principles are too liberal to be true. I believe in truth. I am content to find it. I think it the best mercy — the best humanity — the best sense — the best logic — and it is certainly the safest. I have known many men set up false claims to property, and I never knew one yet, who was conscious of the fact, but was willing to compromise. He could lose nothing, and was certain to gain something. The terms were not very material. He was always liberal. Like the woman that falsely

claimed the child before King Solomon, he was always ready, able and willing to 'divide it.' But not so with the true owner — the man conscious of his rights. It was matter of principle with him. He always said 'all or none' — 'My God and my right.' It seems it ought to be so with the true Church. She ought to listen to no one but her Master. Let her be as inflexible, stubborn, and intolerant as fact and truth always are. Is she not the more beautiful? — the more lovely? the more merciful? Is there any mercy but in the truth? any charity but in the fact? You may possibly be in the right, but my mind is so constituted as not to perceive it. Your theory is certainly very flattering. It raises my individual mind above yourself. But I am after salvation — not flattery. If I were not to be judged hereafter by a severe judge, who knows his own rights — has the ability to protect them — and does not deal in flattery, then I would like your system well. But I have my fears that it will not do. I can have no confidence in a Church that has none in herself — that cannot assure me of anything, because, confessedly, she does not know. It does not seem to have been so with the old Church. She possessed not that infirmity, but lifted her mighty head above the shifting storms below. Like a cloud-capped mountain peak, she aspired to the skies. Her claims were as manifest as the snow-clad sierras. And like the eternal hills, she stood firm and high. And while she held up truth to the world, she never stooped to flatter. I would like to find that Church that has actually 'seen the Lord,' and for that reason has not been reformed, and cannot be reformed; BECAUSE SHE WAS SO CONSTITUTED IN THE BEGINNING AS NEVER TO NEED IT."

If we were to admit that salvation may be found in

many different churches, under the reformable-true-church theory, where shall we fix the limits? Faith must have some determinate limits. If you adopt the theory of more than one Church, where will you stop? And wherever you do stop, are your limits more intelligible — more plain — more just — more certain than the limits of the one-unreformable-Church theory? Are they more charitable or more consistent? You must lay down some sensible rule, some fixed limits, or your theory will not have even the shadow of system in it. It will depend upon the sliding scale of the times. And would that be Christianity? Would such a theory save souls?

Wicked persons are sometimes found in the Catholic Church.

One of the charges made by Mr. Campbell against the Catholic Church was, that wicked persons were sometimes members of her communion.

It must be manifest that no Church can certainly know who are at heart good, and who are evil. No being but God, "whose eye is on the heart," can determine this question. In a visible Church, there must and will be members who are unworthy, and the Church cannot be held responsible for their individual vices. If we make the true visible Church responsible for the acts of wicked members, we place her safety and existence entirely at the mercy of her enemies, who have only to join and then to ruin her. And every member of the Church, from the most elevated and upright down to the most unworthy, is a sinner, to a greater or less extent. We are all sinners.

When Peter asked his Master how often he should forgive his brother, "Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times; but until seventy times seven."

(Matt. xviii, 21, 22.) And again our Blessed Lord declares: "Take heed to yourselves. If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him: and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." (Luke xvii, 3, 4.)

This merciful rule was laid down by our Lord, Who knew full well the infirmity of human nature, and the frailty of man. And we find in His own blessed apostles, the full proof of how great this infirmity is. We hear the fervent and devoted Paul say of himself, "I am carnal, sold under sin. . . . For the good that I would do, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do."

If then my brother trespass against me seven times in a day, and seven times in a day return and say, I repent, I must forgive him. And I must do this upon his saying I repent.

I cannot judge his heart — I can know what he says. What then can the true Church do, but follow the merciful commands of her Master? She cannot make a new law. She must forgive as she has been commanded. If then a member returns and says "I repent," the Church can only forgive him.

And when I came to examine into this subject, I found that by the discipline of the Church, every member was required to confess his sins, and receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least once a year. If he neglect this duty, when in his power, he commits a grave sin. If then he complies with this duty, how can the Church refuse him her fellowship? She allows him a certain period for repentance and confession. If he obey, she must forgive. If he disobey, he is not excluded from the privilege of repentance. Nor is he excluded from assisting in the celebration of her festivals, nor from attending her

worship. All persons have this privilege. She knows that many a wanderer has been called home by kindness. And while she urges all to the strictest obedience, and reproves all for their sins without distinction of condition, and holds up before their eyes the fatal consequences of every sin, she at the same time remembers, that she is bound by the command of her Master to forgive seventy times seven, if her children return and repent. How many by this merciful rule of our Lord, have been finally saved!

There is a marked distinction between the body and soul of the Church. All who are baptized, profess the true faith, assist at the same religious services, and comply with the rules of the Church, belong to the body of the Church, and are numbered among her children. But to faith and exterior communion, must be added hope and charity and the grace of God, that we may belong to the soul of the Church. These two classes God alone can separate. The Church can determine as to what is faith, what is heresy; and while it is her duty to teach all the truth, she cannot judge the inward man. As Bishop Purcell beautifully expresses it: "When Christ empowered the Church to throw her nets into the sea of human life, as the apostles did into the Lake, she gathered into it fishes both good and bad; when the nets are hauled ashore, the good fish will be selected and the bad thrown back into the sea. So will it be at the end of the world. The angels of God will come forth and select the elect from the reprobate — they will gather the wheat into the garner, but the tares they will burn with unquenchable fire." . . . "Hence as long as one of her members disqualifies not himself for the communion of the faithful by flagrant impiety, notorious depravity, or scandalous excess, she rejects him not;

but like that charity of which St. Paul speaks, 'is patient, is kind, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with truth, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, with modesty admonishing men, if peradventure God may give them repentance.' " (Bishop Purcell. Debate C. & P., 71.)

There is such a thing as being too strict. We see it exhibited in the conduct of the Pharisees. Christ was blamed because he eat with publicans and sinners, and because he was their friend. His disciples were blamed for eating as they went through the fields on the Sabbath day. And in the history of the Church subsequent to the days of the apostles, we find the same excessive strictness generally among heretics. The Novatians were condemned for their excessive severity. They would admit of no repentance — of no return to the Church. The Manicheans also claimed the most extraordinary piety, while teaching the most ruinous doctrines. The Vaudois also required their members to be poor and illiterate, making poverty a requisite instead of a perfection, as Christ had done. And if we look into the history of the different sects of condemned heretics, we shall find the greater portion of them always claiming the most rigid virtue, and placing the essentials of religion in the counsels of perfection.

It is very natural that Protestants should regard excommunication among them, if it can be so called, with much less caution than it is regarded by Catholics. This grows out of their theory. It springs necessarily from their rule. With them it is not an expulsion; but a mere separation. It affects not the party. It decides nothing. It does not show that he is a heretic. It is not the slightest evidence that he is so. It simply shows the mere opinion of those who differ with him. In the

contemplation of the theory itself, their opinion is no better than his. They are each independent equals. They then can declare a separation without much danger of doing any injury to the party, even if they are wrong. He can easily join some other church, in which his chances for heaven will be, perhaps, greater than they were in the Church he left.

But it is not so in the Catholic Church. In her theory excommunication still means something. It still has the effect it did of old. For this reason the Council of Trent at its twenty-fifth session, chapter third, required that excommunication should be "used with sobriety and great circumspection."

The successors of the Apostles may be successors in full.

In his debate with Bishop Purcell, Mr. Campbell insisted that the apostles, if they had successors at all, must have successors in full. He refers to the office of President, and says truly, that each succeeding President has the same powers as the first. This same objection is generally made by Protestant controvertists. The essence of the objection is, that the infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost was given to each apostle individually, while it is conceded that each Catholic Bishop is not personally infallible, except the Bishop of Rome; but this infallible assistance is claimed to have been given to the college of teachers, as the organs of the entire corporation, the Church. This college, in its collective capacity, claims the same powers and qualifications to teach, as did the apostles. It will be observed, that the question does not regard the amount of power, nor the extent of the divine assistance, but solely the mode in which this assistance is given. The power and ability to do the same things, that is, to teach the same truths,

are now claimed by the organs of the Church, as were claimed and exercised by the apostles themselves.

The apostles, being the first teachers, had necessarily, in the beginning, to travel into different countries, and remain for several years separated from each other; and this personal infallibility was required by the extraordinary circumstances in which they were placed. But it is still clear, from the history of the council of Jerusalem, that the same infallible assistance was also granted to the college of teachers, including others besides the apostles. This infallible assistance came down in the latter form, to the successors of the apostles.

Besides this, the apostles were chosen witnesses, as well as teachers. The powers they exercised being but delegated, they could act in two or more different capacities. The apostles were to bear witness of Christ; and one of the offices of the Holy Ghost was to bring to their recollection all things that Christ had said to them. (John xiv, 26.) Witnesses can only act individually. Each can only state what he finds written upon his own memory. He is only called upon to state what he knows himself. Recollection is an individual act; and the promise that the Holy Ghost should bring all things to their recollection was, in its nature, confined to the apostles, and the fulfillment of this promise, necessarily made them individually infallible. Under the commission "Go teach," the infallible assistance was promised to the college through all coming time; and under the special promise that the Holy Ghost should bring all things to their recollection, this assistance was given to the apostles individually, because they had more capacities to fill them than their successors under the commission.

CHAPTER IX

CHARGES OF MISCONDUCT AGAINST THE JESUITS AND CERTAIN POPES

Charges against the Jesuits.

Among other charges made against the Catholics, by Mr. Campbell, I found certain allegations against the Jesuits. Although the cause of the Catholic Church is not identical with this order—though she can stand alone without it—and though at one time it had many enemies among Catholics, yet, as it is an influential order in the church, I examined these charges, to the best of my opportunity. The charges of Mr. C. were based mainly upon “The Secreta Monita of the Order of Jesuits.” He states he was informed by the lady from whom he obtained it, that it had been brought to the United States by the Secretary of Lafayette. This Secretary was an Infidel and a Jacobin, as Bishop Purcell stated.

“The Secreta Monita, then,” says Mr. C., “is just as accurate and fair a view of the spirit, design, and policies of that order, as can be given. Such is our faith; and on no mean testimony either.

“We shall give some account of the discovery of this said book:

“We are indebted for this terrible book of Jesuits’ secrets, to the Parliament of Paris. They passed the act to abolish the Jesuits’ society; and the execution came

on the Jesuit college like a thunder stroke. Their palace was surrounded by troops, and their papers and books, and these "Secret Instructions" were seized before they had heard that the parliament had taken up their cause!

"The reasons which the Parliament of France, in 1762, gave for extirpating this order, which has been thirty-nine times proscribed, speak volumes:

"The consequences of their doctrine destroy the laws of nature: break all the bonds of civil society: authorizing lying, theft, perjury, the utmost uncleanness, murder, and all sins! Their doctrines root out all sentiments of humanity: excite rebellion: root out all religion: and substitute all sorts of superstition, blasphemy, irreligion, idolatry.'

"Other reasons for the suppression of this order will be found in the following extract from their oath:

"In the presence of Almighty God and of all the saints, to you, my Ghostly Father, I do declare that his holiness, the Pope, is Christ's vicar-general, and the only head of the universal church throughout the earth; and that by virtue of the keys given him by my Saviour, Jesus Christ, he hath power to depose heretical Kings, princes, states, commonwealths, and governments, all being illegal without his sacred confirmation; and that they may safely be destroyed. Therefore, I to the utmost of my power, shall and will defend his doctrine, and his holiness' rights and customs against all usurpers, etc.

"I do renounce and disown any allegiance as due to any heretical king, prince, state, named Protestants or obedience to any of their inferior magistrates or officers.

"I do further promise and declare, that notwithstanding I am dispensed with, to assume any religion

heretical for the propagation of the mother church's interest — to keep secret and private all her agents, counsel, etc.

“ ‘All of which, I, A B, do swear by the blessed Trinity, and the Blessed Sacrament, which I am now to receive. And I call all the heavenly and glorious hosts above, to witness these my real intentions, to keep this my oath. In testimony hereof, I take this most blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, and set my hand and seal.’ ” (Debate C. & P., 293.)

The *Secreta Monita* having been denied by Bishop Purcell as genuine, and alleged to be a forgery, Mr. Campbell in reply says:

“Knowing, my fellow-citizens, how much depends in such a discussion as that now in progress, on having authentic documents, I determined, from the beginning, to rely on none which could, on proper evidence, or with justice, be repudiated. I know that in all debates so far back as the very era of the Reformation, this party have been accustomed to deny authorities, to dispute versions, translations, etc., even of their own writers who were so candid as to give a tolerably fair representation of themselves.”

After some further remarks of the same tenor, and in reference to the Jesuits, Mr. C. continues:

“Here is another document, not from the ashes of a monastery. I do not know the writer of this article: but it is from an encyclopaedia.” (Debate C. & P., 301.)

One would naturally suppose from this avowal of Mr. C. that he was determined to quote from some authority that could not be questioned. But the *Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, from which he quoted, was a very recent Protestant work, published by Fes-

senden & Co. I afterwards consulted the work myself. It seemed to be generally fair enough to the Protestant sects, usually giving their tenets in the words of some leading member of the particular church; but in all that related to Catholics, it was prejudiced and partial, as could readily be seen by anyone having any tolerable idea of the Catholic faith. Its articles in reference to that Church bear upon their face, to my mind, the impress of onesided and partial statements.

I take so much of the extracted article as gives the essence of the charges against the order.

“The essential principles of this institution, namely, that their order is to be maintained at the expense of society at large, and that the end sanctifies the means, are utterly incompatible with the welfare of any community of men. Their system of lax and pliant morality, justifying every vice, and authorizing every atrocity, has left deep and lasting ravages on the face of the moral world. Their zeal to extend the jurisdiction of the Court of Rome over every civil government, gave currency to tenets respecting the duty of opposing princes who were hostile to the Catholic faith, which shook the basis of all political allegiance, and loosened the obligations of every human law. Their indefatigable industry, and countless artifices in resisting the progress of the Reformed religion, perpetuated the most pernicious errors of Popery, and postponed the triumph of tolerant and Christian principles.

“The evils of Jesuitism arise not from the violation of the principles of the order; on the contrary, they are the natural and necessary fruits of the system; they are confined to no age, place, or person.” (*Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, p. 685, as given by Mr. C.)

This indictment was certainly the most formidable I

had ever read. All the forms in the Criminal Precedents could not equal it. It did not charge this abandoned order of men with certain specified crimes only, but with every crime under heaven. And not only so, but with everything unclean, low, vile, and idolatrous. There was no crime, no degrading practice, of which they were not alleged to be guilty. They were alleged human monsters. So unlimited were their alleged deformities, that they had but one single virtue left, and that was indispensably necessary to complete their alleged system of villainy. They were conceded to have consciences, upon which you could predicate the obligation of an oath. These charges certainly contained enough to satisfy any enemy. If the order had a bitter and slanderous enemy in the world, he certainly could find food enough in this indictment upon which to feast his enmity. He could well say: "This is full, final, and complete. They are charged with everything. Nothing could be better because nothing can be added."

How shall such unfortunate men be tried? With such charges impending over them, can they hope for justice in this world? They come into court crushed with a mass of such a wild multiplicity of charges, that the court and jury instinctively turn from these miserable beings, either guilty of, or unfortunate enough to be charged with, such a total abandonment of all and every moral principle. The very reading of such an indictment is enough to overwhelm them, and to half convict them of its most horrible charges. Ought men so unfortunate as to be charged with such unlimited depravity, even though innocent, to get justice in this world? Why should they? Are they not like the alleged leper, though clean, still dreaded and shunned everywhere? Is it not better humanity to sacrifice such an order of men, than to

face such a calumny? Is it not better to let the melancholy victims of slander go to their graves in shame and ignominy, than to vindicate human nature itself from such a libel? Had we better not hang the principle on high, that the bare making of such charges is conclusive evidence of their truth, and thus put the reputations of all men at the mercy of their enemies?

But are not these Jesuits men? Are they not our brethren? Are they not entitled to the rights of human nature? Ought we not to judge them as we would other men? And not believe them guilty of all the crimes possible against God and humanity, without evidence full and satisfactory, and strong and conclusive, in proportion as the crimes alleged are monstrous and incredible? In other words shall we not judge them by the same rules of charity by which we would be judged ourselves, and under which alone human virtue can claim a home upon this earth?

Shall we permit the mere fact that these men have been so frequently accused, by their enemies, of wrong and injury against society itself, and especially of those vague and general charges, behind which slander is wont to hide itself, to weigh with us? For is it not too true, that as the last refuge of discomfited slander, she contents herself with accusing her victim of some general meanness — of some universal depravity — of a suspicion of being suspected? And shall we take the mere clamor and vehemence of their enemies as evidence in such a case? If we do so, we place the cause of truth in the power of its enemies, for they can always raise a clamor; and the less proof they have, the more clamor they need, and, therefore, the more naturally resort to it; and if we reason upon that basis, and take clamor as evidence, we shall reject Christianity itself; for we must

remember that millions of Jews, by clamor, brought Christ to the Cross. Were they right? Was He guilty? And when Paul met his Jewish brethren at Rome, they had naught to say against the disciples of the Lord Jesus, but that the "sect was everywhere spoken against." We ought to remember that for centuries the Christians were overwhelmed with a mighty mass of accusations, imputing to them crimes the most enormous, improbable, and unreasonable in themselves; and in almost all cases, alleged to have been committed in secret. As the mighty sum total of all their alleged iniquities, they were charged with being "enemies of mankind." And so general was the belief of their guilt, that when the tyrant Nero burned the city of Rome, His first thought was to charge it upon the Christians; a charge like all other wholesale charges, requiring nothing but malice to make, and nothing but prejudice to believe. Had we lived in that age, and had taken the clamor and vehemence of the millions as evidence of the truth of their charges, we could not have been Christians at all. We ought further to remember that Christ expressly foretold that his sincere followers should be "hated of all nations for his name's sake." It is one of the most beautiful truths of Christianity, that this prediction, made so long ago, has been so literally fulfilled in all after ages. Were an intelligent and observant stranger just arrived from a distant land, called upon, with revelation and reason as his sole guide, to select the true followers of Christ, he would unhesitatingly fix upon that body of men most distinguished for their energy, zeal, and devotion; and who especially were most violently abused and opposed by Infidels and discordant sects.

These charges examined.

This charge of universal depravity is expressly made against the entire order. It is not limited to individuals. It includes each and every member. They are all expressly alleged to take the oath. They all concur in everything. They all have the secret instructions. And the sum total of this unlimited system of vice is alleged to be comprised in this short sentence: "The end sanctifies the means." I must say, that ingenious malice, with the whole world for its range, and all time for its duration, could not possibly have invented a charge more extended in meaning, and more concise in words. This short sentence of only five omnipotent words, embodies a charge of every crime under heaven; and is so short that it can be repeated oft and oft again; and is yet so extensive in meaning, that as often as it is repeated, it leaves the prejudiced and disordered imagination, in selecting the food it feeds upon, to revel, untrammelled, in all the wide fields of human iniquity. Like the charge against the early Christians of being "enemies of mankind," or like that often made by malicious persons, "he is a mean man," it has no limits; and everything may be included under it that may suit the appetite of each individual.

There are certain instincts in envy, malice, and prejudice, that seem to have been provided by God himself, on purpose to defeat the ends aimed at by these base passions. Envy always depreciates superior merit; and when the act itself is too good to be denied, never fails to impute an improper motive to him who performed it; while malice in its bitterness, is never satisfied with imputing to its victim anything short of the most enormous and improbable crimes, and the more innocent

the victim, the more cordially it hates him, because the more unlike itself; and prejudice could not claim its peculiar merit, if it believed reasonable charges, upon sufficient testimony, but must out-suspect and out-guess everything else.

One of the difficulties that occurred to me, in my reflections upon this alleged oath, was the extreme folly of attempting to bind men, by an oath, who had no conscience. To swear men by "the blessed Trinity," "and the blessed sacrament," while they called "all the heavenly and glorious hosts above to witness," that they would commit all the crimes possible, if necessary, did seem to me the most futile and the most idle. What ideas of the obligation of an oath could such men have? They are alleged to have had no virtue upon which conscience could rest. Men who could deliberately go into such an association, and then undertake to obey these secret instructions, could no more be trusted than rogues and murderers.

When, for my own satisfaction, I was inquiring into the truth of Christianity, I was struck with the peculiar force of one argument. It was insisted that we could not account for the conduct of the apostles, upon the supposition that they had combined to assert a system of falsehood, and to palm it upon the world—that it was impossible to combine twelve men, and send them out into all the world, to preach the same falsehoods, and that all of them should remain faithful, on all occasions, however painful the test, and not betray the secret. I could well understand how such a union could be formed and kept together, upon the basis of truth, but never upon that of falsehood, when the same was known to the whole party. I knew there were moments when the truth will come.

“For e’en the rogue by fits is fair and wise”—that all men had an inward conviction and dread of future punishment, and in the honest hour of death, when the

“scathing thoughts of execrated years,”

brought up before the dying vision of the guilty culprit the blurred and blotted page of the ignominious past—that then murder would out. Some of them would tell it—some would let it out.

How then will this argument apply to the Jesuits as an order of men, governed by certain rules applicable to the whole class? It is alleged in substance by their accusers, that they had one set of rules for the public, which were good enough, and another set of rules to be kept a profound secret, from all persons but members of the order. These secret rules contained the horrible sentiments charged, and were all alleged to be printed in a book called “*The Secreta Monita*,” and kept for the use of the members.

This order was intended to be perpetual, and its members were expected to become numerous, and to be scattered all over the wide earth. And so they were. They numbered some ten thousand members, at the date of their suppression. It was a most extraordinary combination. The mind that originated it must have been at one and the same time a giant and a pigmy—must have possessed grand and sublime ideas—systematic powers, and yet not a particle of principle, and not the slightest knowledge of human nature. All the members of this body must have had strange and singular views. Like other men, they knew they must die—that their ranks must be supplied with new members—that these would be induced to apply for admission upon the basis of the published rules, which were honest;

but that after they became members, they were to be changed from pious, honest, and sincere men, to monsters of crime; and that so perfect was the logic of the order that it never failed to make this conversion from honesty to villainy; so that there was not one left to tell the story, that such infamous principles and oaths had been proposed to him, and by him rejected with scorn and indignation. In other words, they must have thought that the most effectual way to organize a band of abandoned reprobates, was to put forth a platform in public, that would only invite the pious and good, but when once in the order, that each new member, though deceived and defrauded, would at once, by some extraordinary magic, abandon all his previous views, and submit willingly, kindly, to this infamous deception, and work faithfully and continuously, in upholding this same stupendous fraud.

Not only so, but they must have thought that the book containing their secret rules, could never come to light by any of the ten thousand accidents of life — that although in the hands of all Jesuits, scattered all over the world, that still when one died his book would not be left behind him, to fall into the hands of some one who might betray the mighty secret — that when one of their members committed murder by poison or assassination, that no chemical test could be found to show the existence of the deadly drug in the stomach of the deceased, and the spilled blood of the assassinated would leave no stain — and when they went upon their midnight excursions of crime, they would leave no trace, nor track, but flit through the air, like wicked spirits, unseen, but felt. These men seem never to have understood the one plain simple fact, that the introduction of every new conspirator, only increased the danger of detection; but

like some foolish people who tell their secrets to everybody, that they may have good help to keep them, these men, while utterly destitute of principle, still had unlimited confidence in each other, and never once suspected, that men, capable of, and pledged to commit, every possible crime, must certainly sooner or later, fall out among themselves, and betray the whole conspiracy. If these monstrous charges be true these men were extraordinary monsters, destitute alike of all principle and of all common sense. If I could believe such charges, then I should not only consider the Jesuits as the greatest mass of conglomerated vice that ever disgraced humanity, but as the greatest collection of fools that ever degraded human intellect. And I am willing to say, in the face of all men, that I am one of those charitable, credulous creatures (fools if you please) who believe that the great mass of all churches, and of all the different orders of those churches, are honest in their convictions; and that, in the very nature and reason of things, it could not be otherwise — that honest conviction, though erroneous, is the only basis upon which any society of men can be held together from age to age — and that no man, or set of men, having the least claim to intellect, ever did dream, or ever will dream of organizing a permanent order of men, upon any other basis. As well might it be assumed, that a resident and fixed community could all be rogues, who would wear out the very property itself in stealing it continually one from the other, and yet competition would not ruin the trade, and destroy the union and peace of the society, as that a numerous, widely-dispersed, and gifted body of religious men, could be held together when even a majority are hypocrites and villains; much less when all are so.

But the history of the Jesuits, as well as the admis-

sions of candid men not of their religion, show that they are a most distinguished order of men — distinguished for their profound and varied erudition — their indefatigable industry — their zeal — their heroic devotion — their untiring energy, and their unfaltering and steady perseverance. These are noble traits — fit companions of integrity. When I see the fervid and intrepid Paul leave his own country, and go through strange lands, suffering persecution and shame at every step, and wearing out his very existence in preaching the mild gospel of the despised Nazarine, I am compelled in the innermost recesses of my heart, to admit his motives were good — his integrity unquestioned; for I cannot find any other adequate motive, upon any principle of reason or charity, by which to account for such voluntary sacrifices. And when I see the labors and sacrifices of the Jesuit Fathers in every land, among all nations — how they composed the noblest orations, the finest histories, the sublimest poems, and wrote the ablest treatises on every branch of science, (even that of gunnery) — when I see these devoted missionaries go

“through foaming waves to distant shores,”

visiting every people in the world, and like the sainted Xavier,

“whose lips were love, whose touch was power,
whose thoughts were vivid flame,”

leaving their worn-out or slaughtered bodies in every savage clime, and enduring toils and dangers, sufferings and privations, second only to those of the apostles and earlier saints, I cannot deny to these men holy and lofty motives; for it seems not more natural for the oak to grow from the acorn, than for noble and virtuous deeds and heroic sacrifices, to spring from corresponding mo-

tives. As certain acids are the sure tests of certain metals, so great and voluntary sacrifices, without temporal reward, are the never failing criterions of sincerity. And when I witness the perseverance, and patient and continued duration of this body of men through calumny, hatred, and contempt, in a cause in which they can have no greater personal interest than others, I cannot see any other adequate motive than those high and holy purposes that spring from a fixed conviction of being in the right, in the noblest of causes. I am compelled to this conviction, notwithstanding all the clamor against these men; and why? If it be true, as nearly all Catholics think, and many others admit, that this order of men are the most eminent for their knowledge, virtue, zeal, and devotion, of all the orders in the Roman church or in the world, then from the very reason and nature of things, this state of misrepresentation must follow; for if there be any envy in rival orders of their own church, it would fix itself upon them, for envy always seeks "higher game." And if there be any fear, malice, or prejudice in the ranks of opponents, they would be mainly directed against them; for fear has an unerring instinct in apprehending the most formidable danger, while malice is fertile in inventing, and interested prejudice most ready in believing, charges against the most distinguished men in the ranks of opponents. When we hear the writer in the encyclopaedia say, as I have quoted above, that "their indefatigable industry, and countless artifices in resisting the progress of the reformed religion, perpetuated the most pernicious errors of popery," we have the key to the motive that keeps alive this denunciation. When we hear Mr. Campbell say, "The Jesuits, that standing army of the Pope, are revived, and inundating our country. Other fraternities

are but the militia; but these are the trained band life-guards of the papacy," (Debate C. & P., 301) we can readily see where the shoe pinches. When you go into an orchard, even months after the fruit is all gone, and you see there a noble looking tree, whose wide-spreading top is filled with sticks, so that you know everybody has been "pitching into it," you may know, with unerring certainty that this tree produces the best fruit in the orchard.

The circumstances connected with the alleged discovery of this *Secreta Monita*, upon their face, proved to my satisfaction that it was a forgery. This event happened in the Infidel times preceding the horrors that followed the French Revolution. It was the age of Voltaire and other distinguished Infidels. Voltaire was accustomed to say that "he was tired of hearing it said, that twelve men had been able to convert the world from Paganism to Christianity, for that he would let it be seen that one man was able to unchristianize it." At the head of his letters to his infidel conspirators against revelation, he was accustomed to say, "Let us crush the wretch," meaning Jesus Christ and His religion. In the private correspondence of Voltaire and D'Alembert, it is acknowledged there was no hope of success in destroying Christianity, unless the Jesuits were first put down. This order of men, by their talents, industry, and zeal, were able to keep in check the attempts of the Infidels, by refuting and exposing their sophistry. The Parliament of France in 1762, notwithstanding all they say about religion, etc., was composed mostly of the disciples of Voltaire.

A Parliament thus constituted could be readily imposed upon. It required only a few conspirators to accomplish this. It is a fact well shown by the testi-

mony of history, that a legislative assembly, from its constitution, is as readily deceived in times of prejudice and excitement, as the same number of individuals taken promiscuously. Such assemblies are peculiarly sensitive to outside clamor. They readily believe almost anything that they think is popular. This fact is shown by the history of the English Parliament. This body was deceived to such an extent as to believe the repeated perjuries of Titus Oates and others, and many innocent persons were sent to the block in consequence. In 1666 the city of London was burned, and the conflagration charged upon the Catholics. It was believed, and a monument erected and inscribed, commemorating the supposed dark deed, of which Pope has this expressive couplet:

“Where London’s column, pointing to the skies,
Like a tall bully, lifts its head, and lies.”

A few years ago, the corporation of London had the magnanimity to have this inscription chipped off.

To accomplish the suppression of the Jesuits in France, the Infidels knew, could not be done by any outward attack of theirs. They stood as declared enemies of religion. The plan was to operate upon the Parliament. They knew from the examples in the English Parliament how easy this could be effected, when the prejudices of the members were appealed to. It was easy to reproduce this forged *Secreta Monita*, originated by some anonymous calumniator in 1616. All they had to do was to palm it upon the Parliament as the work of the Jesuits. That was easily done. Ever since Joseph had the silver cup concealed in the sack of Benjamin, this expedient was well known. It was used by Joseph from a good motive, but it has been resorted to by malicious persons in every age. No artifice is more frequently practiced,

or is more easily accomplished. Cases of the kind have often occurred in every country. Two men were once partners, and had some difficulty in their settlement. One became the violent enemy of the other, and persecuted him on every occasion. The persecuted determined he would leave the Kingdom and emigrate to America to avoid his implacable enemy. In preparing to make his departure he went to London and took a room at a public house. His old enemy met him in the streets, and watched him go into his room. The next morning his enemy watched the room until he saw him leave and go into the street. His enemy then went to another room on the same floor, and stole a watch, and secreted it in his victim's room. The owner of the watch missed it, and gave the alarm. This man was by, and informed the police that a very suspicious character lodged in a certain room. Of course they searched the room and found the watch. The victim was arrested, protested his ignorance of the whole matter, was tried, convicted, and executed. Years afterwards, his murderer was brought up to receive sentence for some criminal offence, and before the court, admitted that he had caused this man's execution.

The circumstances stated, show clearly, that such an artifice was used upon the occasion of the alleged discovery of this *Secreta Monita*. The very haste with which the Parliament acted in reference to so important a measure, shows they had been informed that such a work would be found. Intimations had been no doubt given out that if such a hasty measure was adopted the insidious Jesuits would be caught. Having succeeded in procuring the passage of such an act, it was easy for a single individual to carry with him the book concealed under his dress, and when the apartments of

the college were searched, to place this book among the others found there. It required but the act of a single individual—one of the police, or any other individual who was permitted to go there.

How easy it is, if we depend upon such testimony, to ruin any man's reputation, or the character of any body of men. Such a system of reasoning places all good men at the mercy of conspirators. And when the charge upon its face, is so utterly absurd and impracticable, and beyond all reason, such a circumstance ought not to weigh as a feather against a body of men so numerous—so distinguished—so much in the way of its opponents—and for whose suppression there existed so many manifest motives. To ruin such a body of men, if sensible and just men can believe such mighty charges upon such testimony, requires nothing but a want of principle—a small amount of cunning—and the adroitness of an ordinary rogue, in a single individual.

Having succeeded in obtaining the suppression of the order in France, the next step was to secure its suppression in other states, and finally by the Pope himself. If we examine into the character and motives of the principal men who took the leading part in these violent measures against the order, we shall see that they were just the men to urge them onward. They were generally either avowed or secret enemies of religion, and especially of the Catholic system. As a very candid Protestant writer, speaking of the persecution of the Jesuits by the Portuguese government, and the destruction of their college at Pernambuco, says:

“Reader, throw a veil over thy recollection for a little while, and forget the cruel, unjust, and unmerited censures thou hast heard against an unoffending order.

This place was once the Jesuits' College, and originally built by those charitable fathers. Ask the aged and respectable inhabitants of Pernambuco, and they will tell thee, that the destruction of the society of the Jesuits was a terrible disaster to the public, and its consequences severely felt to the present day.

“When Pombal took the ruins of government into his hands, virtue and learning beamed within the college walls. Public catechism to the children, and religious instruction to all, flowed daily from the mouths of its venerable priests. They were loved, revered, and respected throughout the whole town. The illuminating philosophers of the day had sworn to exterminate Christian knowledge, and the College of Pernambuco was doomed to founder in the general storm. To the long-lasting sorrow and disgrace of Portugal, the philosophers blinded her King, and flattered his prime minister. Pombal was exactly the tool these sappers of every public and private virtue wanted. He had the naked sword of power in his own hand, and his heart was as hard as flint. He struck a mortal blow and the society of Jesuits, throughout the Portuguese dominions, was no more.” (*Wanderings in South America*, By Chas. Waterton, Esq.; p. 82.)

The Pope was induced to suppress the order in 1773. In the Brief of Clement XIV. he is careful not to say that he believed the charges to be true, but on the contrary, bases the suppression upon the grounds of expediency and for the sake of peace. The parliament of Paris restored the order. In 1801 it was restored in Russia, and in 1814 in Sardinia, and in 1814 by Pope Pius VII. The King of Prussia, though Protestant, did not suppress the order in his dominions, but fostered it. He did not believe the charges.

It has been the misfortune of this order to incur the hostility of Infidels, and especially those of Europe. We see that an Infidel brought the *Secreta Monita* to the United States. The distinguished novelist, the Infidel Eugene Sue, in his late work, the *Wandering Jew*, has imputed to the Jesuits all the dark and horrible traits of his own vitiated imagination.

This order is evidently a foe worthy of their steel, and *in* their way. Unable to meet their arguments and exertions by fair means, they resorted to forgery and base imposition to suppress the order. They succeeded for a time under a state of clamor and excitement. But justice, though slow, is certain, and the order has been restored. It had once many enemies among Catholics, but these have dwindled to a very few.

That these charges against the entire order are absurd and barefaced fabrications, I have no doubt. That individuals of the order, as individuals of any and every body, have sometimes erred, I have as little doubt. They would be more than men if they had not. That the suppression of the order by Clement XIV. was mainly produced by the exertions of Infidels in that Infidel age, I have no doubt. And that the clamor is still attempted to be kept up by persons whose interests or prejudices render them capable of believing any charge, supported by even the semblance of testimony, against their opponents in religion, I have no doubt.

The charges, if made against individuals of the order, would not affect the order itself, in the minds of just men; and when made against the entire order, assume a shape so monstrous, unreasonable, and absurd, that I do not think any impartial and well-informed man could be deceived into a belief of them. When I first read them, I was a Protestant, and all my sympathies were with

Protestantism; but this charge of universal and unmitigated depravity against so numerous a body of men, was rather too heavy a draft upon my credulity.

It seems to me that every good man should be very careful to be just to others. The rule of sweet charity is the only one under which human virtue can live. It is better to allow too much merit to men than too little. Men are frail enough, and their virtues are sufficiently scant; but when we detract from that little, and accuse them of monstrous crimes they never committed, we certainly commit a most grievous sin against them, and especially against ourselves. If we err in imputing too few sins to our fellow-creatures, we may be called weak, but not criminal. We at least lean to the side of charity. But if we impute to them crimes they never committed, we commit ourselves, a grievous fault; for we are commanded to "Judge not, that ye be not judged: for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." It is a fearful thing for us to judge harshly and unjustly, as we must expect to be judged by the same rule.

These considerations satisfied me that the Jesuits were an eminent, devoted, yet misrepresented body of men. And when I find what I take to be slandered merit, I hesitate not to avow myself its friend; for I do not know what other rule a good man can follow, than to do that which is strictly right in itself, and trust in God and his country. Too many well-disposed men are apt to flinch from a good, but unpopular victim; but "'tis not so above." Innocence is purer when persecuted, and virtue is never so beautiful as when calumniated and despised. It was so in the beginning. It must always be so. And I cannot but think that if any good and impartial man, who has taken up an impression that such wholesale charges are true, will re-examine the question calmly

and dispassionately, he will enjoy that sweet and generous pleasure which a just man feels when he finds he has been mistaken in supposing that his brother had been guilty of a crime.

Charges against certain Popes.

Among other charges made by Protestant controversialists against the Catholic Church, is the wicked character of some of the Popes. The instances can be seen in the debate of Campbell and Purcell, and in the controversy of Hughes and Breckenridge.

The most general and sweeping charges I found in the Dissertation of Dr. Spring, on page 71, where the learned Divine says:

“But it is a fact that no Romanist will deny, that the Popes of Rome, as a body of men, have been a disgrace to the human race.”

This statement must have been made at random, for I found it contradicted by every Catholic writer whose works I read at the time and since, who spoke upon the subject at all. I have not been able to find a Catholic writer who did not deny it, when the subject he treated made it proper for him to notice the charge. All those that I have read very cheerfully admitted that the conduct of some individual Popes had been scandalous and wicked, while they insisted that the great majority were worthy of the station they filled, and many of them martyrs and saints of the first character; and that these wicked Popes did not bear a greater proportion to the whole number, than Judas did to the twelve.

These charges related to some of the Popes of the middle ages. Those of the first ages of the Church are admitted to have been saints; while those of the later ages are admitted, by Catholic and Protestant writers,

to have been unexceptionable in their moral deportment: as by the Protestant writer Ranke, in his history of the Popes, as stated by Dr. Wiseman in his Moorfield Lectures. (Lec. VIII.)

In making these and other charges against the Catholic Church, both Mr. Campbell and Mr. Breckenridge quoted Du Pin as an authentic Catholic historian. But his character as such was denied by both Bishops Hughes and Purcell.

It appeared that Du Pin had a secret correspondence with Archbishop Wake, with a view to the union of the English and Catholic churches. His secret papers were examined on the 10th of February, 1719, at the Palais Royal in Paris, and it was found as Lafitau testifies, that in his letter to Wake, he proposed to give up Auricular Confession, Transubstantiation, Religious vows, the fast of Lent and abstinence, the Supremacy of the Pope, and the celibacy of the clergy. He was also secretly married, and after his death, his widow came publicly forward to assert her right to his property. To support his authority, Mr. Campbell read the certificates printed with the work, and purporting to be the approbation of the doctors of the Sorbonnè. Two of these certificates purport to be signed by "Blampton, Rector of St. Merris; and Hideux, curate of St. Innocents," and one by the former only. They approve the work as containing "nothing contrary to the Catholic faith or to good manners," but do not approve or disapprove the work as authentic history.

The Doctors of the Sorbonne were appointed by the king. The authority is not of the highest grade, though respectable. Du Pin at the time he wrote his history, was not suspected of any hypocrisy. He was a very distinguished writer, and stood high with his associates.

His work was voluminous and the hasty reading of an author of his standing, in an historical work so extended, would not enable anyone to judge properly of its historical character. A work upon doctrine or morals can be judged very soon by any competent divine, but a work on history, so extensive, would be far more difficult. It would require time and patient investigation to detect its errors. Such approbations are too often given hurriedly, the judge relying too much upon the standing and character of the author. Besides, Du Pin was a Jansenist, and was censured by Pope Clement XI., even during his lifetime; and Louis XIV. removed him from the Sorbonne, which was approved by the Pope. (Debate C. & P., 32, 37. Con. H. & B., 372.)

It may be possible that Du Pin was an authentic historian; but certainly he appears under circumstances most suspicious. An honest man may be a member of a certain church, and may write its history, and that work may be good authority after he has changed his faith, and left the Church. But when a man remains a traitor in a church, and seeks to betray it, and lives a hypocrite while in it, there is no trusting him for anything. A man of distinguished ability, and yet a hypocrite, would naturally seek in the most insidious manner possible, to injure the Church of which he was a member. He could not but hate a church whose faith he could not believe; and he could not but have some fell purpose when he believed one thing and told another. Who can trust such a man?

Mr. Campbell did indeed state that he relied upon him only in so far as he is sustained by other historians; but as he continued to quote from him, after objection was made by Bishop Purcell, and after Mr. C. had read the objections of Bishop Hughes, as he states himself, (De-

bate C. & P., 28) I could not well understand his reasons. If, as he asserted, Du Pin was sustained by other historians, it certainly would have been more satisfactory to have read entirely from them.

Herein I remarked a great and palpable difference between the course of Catholic and Protestant controversialists. I found the Catholics generally quoting from the most eminent and reliable Protestant writers and historians, men of the most unblemished character, private and public, while on the contrary, I found Protestants generally quoting from the most unworthy and suspicious Catholics, such as Du Pin, Father Paul, Thuanus, and others. The debate between Elder Campbell and Bishop Purcell is a proof of this. So is the controversy between Hughes and Breckenridge. And if any man of fair mind will calmly watch both parties, he will soon see which most relies upon unworthy authority.

Mr. Breckenridge quotes "Thuanus, Book 37, p. 776," as a Catholic historian, to prove alleged corruptions at Rome. In reference to whom, Bishop Hughes says: "The history of Thuanus has been condemned at Rome, by two public decrees; the one of November 9, 1609, the other of May 10, 1757, from which fact the reader may see, with how little propriety he assumes to be called a 'Roman Catholic historian.' 'He was,' says a modern author (Paquot), 'an audacious writer, the implacable enemy of the Jesuits; the calumniator of the Guises; the copyist, flatterer, friend of the Protestants; and was far from being even just to the Holy See, the Council of Trent or anything Catholic.'" (Con. H. & B., 372.)

But aside from these disputed and not trustworthy historians, from the testimony of Baronius and other authentic Catholic historians quoted by Mr. C. and Mr. B., there can be no doubt of the scandalous lives of cer-

tain Popes, such as Stephen VII., Vigilius, Alexander and others.

The whole number of Popes has been nearly two hundred and sixty. "Of these," says Bishop Purcell, "the first forty were saints, or martyrs; a small number only, not more than twenty can be called bad men; the rest were remarkable for eminent virtue, charity, zeal, and learning, and patronage of letters." (Debate C. & P., 146.) Mr. Breckenridge and Mr. Campbell asserted that the number of bad Popes was greater than twenty, and Mr. C. quotes Genebrard, who says, under the year 904, "For nearly one hundred and fifty years, about fifty Popes deserted wholly the virtue of their predecessors, being apostate rather than apostolical;" but the accuracy of this statement as to the number is denied by Bishop Purcell. And, indeed, the statement seems very loose and general. Such statements are not often accurate.

As to the exact number of Popes who disgraced their position, it is difficult at this time, to determine. That injustice has been done to some of them, there can be but little doubt. It must seem obvious to sensible men, that the character of a prominent man depends greatly upon the temper of the age in which he lived. There are often many causes, and a peculiar concurrence of circumstances, that involve a man's reputation in doubt in some cases, and in ignominy in others, when his motives were good, and when his measures, under the existing circumstances, were the best that could have been adopted. The bitter prejudice, or inveterate enmity, of a single able and influential individual, in an age when books were few, (for the reason that the art of printing was then unknown,) might do the greatest injustice to the person whose history is sought. Nothing but a patient

and careful examination of the contemporary manuscript documents on file in the various extensive libraries of Europe, can enable us to do anything like justice to the Popes of the middle ages. When I have been induced to examine charges against individuals, I always go to them for their side of the question; for I never could get all the truth from their enemies. Most cases of the kind are overdone. Men are prone to have victims of some kind. We see it often in communities, in reference to particular persons. The public must blame some one, and from some cause or other, it matters not what it is, censure starts in a particular direction, and when once under way, it is as difficult to stop as a mountain torrent. It must run its course. Even good men are often swept along with it. It is even so in business. All hands rush into great excesses at intervals. Human nature is prone to varied and unsteady courses.

Most of these scandalous excesses of the Popes occurred in a certain period, and about the tenth century. As several bad Popes lived near each other, it is very natural for historians, as well as the people of that age, to confound both good and bad, and place them in the same class. Poor Tray suffered for being in bad company, and some of the Popes who lived in the Middle Ages, may have suffered from the misfortune of having governed the Church at that period of time. Even the most pious and candid writers, from their very detestation of vice, may, in their melancholy moments, do great injustice to those who, though guilty of some faults, are not guilty to the extent supposed. It has become a habit to censure everything done in those ages; and doubtless there was much to be blamed. But this habit, like all other habits, may have misled even just men. Those ages were not distinguished for great learning, and the

people of those times were encompassed with difficulties of the most oppressive character. They have, therefore, few friends to do them justice, and many disgusted and interested enemies to reproach their memory. The natural tendency of human opinion is to elevate some favorite ages to the skies, and to depreciate even the real merits of those that are despised and neglected.

But justice should be done. The genuine truth ought to be known. And it appears that of late, a better spirit begins to show itself. "Within the last ten years," says Dr. Wiseman, (Moorfield Lec., L. viii.,) "a succession of works has been appearing on the continent, in which the character of the Popes of the Middle Ages has been not only vindicated, but placed in the most beautiful and magnificent point of view. And I thank God that they are, as I just said, from a quarter that cannot be suspected — every one of the works to which I allude being the production of a Protestant. We have had, within these few years, several lives, or vindications, of the Pontiff who has been considered the embodying type of that thirst for aggrandizement which is attributed to the Popes of the middle ages. I speak of Gregory VII., commonly known by the name of Hildebrand. In a large voluminous work, published a few years ago by Voight, and approved by the most eminent historians of modern Germany, we have the life of that Pontiff drawn up from contemporaneous documents, from his own correspondence, and the evidence of both his friends and enemies. The result is, and I wish I could give you the words of the author, that if the historian abstract himself from mere petty prejudices and national feelings, and look on the character of that Pontiff from a higher ground, he must pronounce him a man of most upright mind, of a most perfect disinterestedness, and of the

purest zeal; one who acted in every instance just as his position called upon him to act, and made use of no means, save what he was authorized to use. In this he is followed by others who speak of him with an enthusiasm which a Catholic could not have exceeded; and of one, it has been observed, that he cannot speak of that Pontiff without rapture." Of these other Protestant writers Dr. Wiseman gives in a note the names of Eichhorn, Luden, Loo, and Muller.

"We have had, too, within the last two years, another most interesting work, a Life of Innocent III. one of the most abused in the line of Papal succession, written by Hurter, a clergyman of the Protestant church of Germany. He again has coolly examined all the allegations which have been brought against him; and has based his studies entirely on the monuments of the age; and the conclusion to which he comes is, that not only is his character beyond reproach, but that it is an object of unqualified admiration. And to give you some idea of the feelings of this work, I will read you two extracts applicable to my subject in general. Thus writes our author: 'Such an immediate instrument in the hands of God, for securing the highest weal of the community, must the Christian of these times, the ecclesiastic, and still more, he who stood nearest to the center of the church, have considered him who was its head. Every worldly dignity works only for the good of an earthly life, for a passing object; the Church alone for the salvation of all men, for an object of endless duration. If worldly power is from God, it is not so in the sense, and in the measure, and in the definitiveness in which the highest spiritual power of these ages was; whose origin, development, extent, and influence, (independently of all

dogmatical formulas,) form the most remarkable appearance in the world's history.'

"In another passage he thus speaks: 'Let us look forward and backward from any period upon the times, and see how the institution of the Papacy has out-lastcd all the other institutions of Europe; how it has seen all other states rise and perish; how, in the endless changes of human power, it alone invariably has preserved and maintained the same spirit; can we be surprised, if many look upon it as the rock which raises itself unshaken above the stormy waves of time?'"

I am satisfied myself, that the vices of those ages have been much exaggerated. I admit most cheerfully that I am but partially acquainted with the history of those times. My pursuits have led me into other fields of inquiry. But my opinion is formed upon general principles — upon my ideas of the nature of men and things. If the literature of an age happens to be inferior, the scholar turns from it with indifference, if not with disgust. In such cases, few, if any, will feel any interest in doing justice even to the solid virtues and common sense of that age. Their faults are narrated in harsh and severe terms, while their virtues are not recorded in the glowing pages of polished eulogy. I like to read the correspondence of men — public and private — when I wish to understand their characters. In all my experience — in all my travels in different modes — in cities — at taverns — and in all other positions, the most just and certain mode I could ever adopt to find out the true character of people, was to let them tell their own story — to state their own principles, and then to watch, calmly and impartially, the general drift and spirit of the narrative. Men will generally talk of that which they love most. I never met an unprincipled man, that

I know of, except in one solitary instance, that did not unduly elevate talent above integrity. Such men invariably put forth some vicious principle, or applaud some smart, but dishonest trick, in some one else. An unprincipled man, one who is so habitually, will never fail to show it in his own statements. There will be a vein of vicious principle found somewhere in his discourse. A man must be a supreme adept at hypocrisy that can wear the mask always. He must be remarkable for his patience and perseverance.

In estimating the character and conduct of the Popes of the middle ages, we must place ourselves back in the circumstances that then existed, we must enter into the spirit of those times, and take things as we find them. We must remember that men, nations, and ages must be judged with reference to their opportunities and positions. The middle ages succeeded the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, and the terrible scourge of the Saracens in the East and South. Literature, science and arts had suffered extensively by these devastations. It was emphatically the period of misfortune. The very fact that nearly all of the bad Popes existed at one period in this long line of succession, is, of itself, almost conclusive proof, that the circumstances of the times mainly produced these sad delinquencies. Making, then, every fair allowance, there seems to be no doubt that some twenty out of near two hundred and sixty Popes have been wicked men. And their excesses have been freely condemned by Catholics, whose histories record these vices. These Popes followed each other by succession. That in a long course of ages, instances of personal misconduct would occur even among the Popes, must be expected.

What then is the legitimate effect of these scandals

upon the Catholic system? Are they abuses, or are they the natural result of the system? Do they prove that the Papacy never existed? that it could be thus forfeited? or that the misconduct of a few individuals, at intervals in the long line of her history, has destroyed the true church?

In considering this matter, we must distinguish between personal and official misconduct. In personal matters men act for themselves — in official matters — for others. In one case they exercise personal and inherent natural rights — in the other they are clothed with delegated powers. To confound these, is to confound the most manifest distinctions — distinctions which must exist where government exists.

As I have elsewhere stated, I never understood that Christ had guaranteed the personal virtue of His ministers. He left the personal free agency of all men untouched. But when men act as His agents, and for Him, then I understand that He did guarantee their official acts. A true prophet cannot lie. He is not permitted to do so. And it is conceded as a plain principle of law, that the agent, from the nature of the relation, is not free in reference to the business of his principal, except when discretion is given. Christ did not leave the apostles any discretion. They were bound to testify and teach the whole truth, and only the truth. So, if Christ guaranteed the integrity of the Church, then her official acts must be right, as to all matters within the guaranty.

The Popes; like all men at the heads of great institutions, were placed in a position where they had every incentive to do good, and yet were exposed to very trying temptations. Many persons who held the High-priesthood under the Jewish dispensation disgraced the position, from Heli to Caiaphas, who was a wicked man

and a good high-priest, as Mr. Campbell says. Aaron made the golden calf. But all these sad instances of human infirmity did not destroy the office, nor forfeit the existence of the institution. Is the church then responsible for the personal vices of these Popes? Could the Church take away their free agency, and prevent their sins?

When we come to take a view of the general official conduct of these Popes, we find one of the most beautiful proofs of the invincible stability of the Church. It is indisputable, and now conceded by many, if not by most Protestant writers, that the alleged errors of the Roman Church were introduced long before the main portions of these disorders occurred, if they were not in the Church at the beginning. It is true, some attempts are still made by particular controvertists to prove that at least a portion of them originated after these scandals commenced. But any one can easily see that this is untrue, by a very slight examination of the proofs. It is also true, that in the Pontificates of some of these Popes, Christianity was extended by their exertions into several savage countries. In fact, some of the greatest conquests made to religion occurred at those periods. There were no new heresies introduced — there was no cardinal doctrine of faith lost. This showed unity — this showed diligence — this showed integrity as to faith.

How then can we account for these great and illustrious results, but upon the hypothesis that the faith of the Church was protected by Christ, as He had promised? Looking to that age — the times — the circumstances when these scandals existed, and what other Church could have ridden out the terrible storm? Could Protestantism (which has only existed for about three centuries, and that in the most fortunate and enlightened

period of the world, and has yet severed and divided into so many fragments,) have withstood this trial?

When we look into the matter carefully, there is something wonderful in this history. For the Catholic says to himself: "As the old Church withstood all this, what can she not withstand? Is she not invincible under circumstances that have crushed all existing institutions? They died out like falling stars — she shone on. They were — she was, and is, and is to be. It was the glory of our Lord to stand alone. So it is with His church."

And the more the opposers of the Church urge these disorders, the more they strengthen the conviction in the mind of the Catholic, that it is impossible for the Old Church to have sustained herself under such untoward circumstances, without the help of Christ. What Christ has instituted, men cannot destroy. They have power over the works of their own hands, but here their power ends. Despite the desolation of the Goth and Vandal — the ravages of the invincible Saracen — the trials and evils of the age — and above all, the personal wickedness of some of her own Chief Pastors, the Old Church faltered not, but kept the faith, preached the Gospel to the world, and actually extended the Master's Kingdom. She, of all the institutions of the world, has lived unscathed through that day. Amidst all the ruin, she alone held up her head.

"As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

In my reflections upon this subject, I could not but consider the triumph of the Church, under such circumstances, as one of the most forcible and beautiful proofs

of the truth of Christianity. It did show that the Lord Jesus was to be trusted. That even the personal misconduct of her own children — of her own chief officer, could not ruin the work of Christ. He had said it should be so, and it was so.

I could not but wish to put these questions to those who exaggerate these personal sins of the Popes: "My friends, the more you overdo these allegations, the more difficult, I apprehend, you make your own case. You say, in substance, that there was no virtue in the Papacy. Where, then, was that wonderful virtue that saved the Church? Under your supposed state of case do give us some good reason for that wonderful preservation of the Church. There was evidently great vitality and virtue somewhere. Your alleged true church had to change its faith and features very often to live at all; and in these trying times, was not on the field of battle. Or if so, did nothing. Was it 'buried beneath the darkness of those ages,' as Waddington says? If so, why did not that darkness overwhelm the Catholic Church? Was the Protestant true Church alone unable to hold up her head in the stern hour of trial, while the alleged false church did all the good that was done? And what Church did save Europe from Barbarism? What Church saved Christianity, if not the Catholic? You have certainly much fault to find with her. But who won the victory over the savage and the Saracen, but the Catholic Church? In short, who else did anything for learning, virtue, civilization, and religion in those most perilous times? Her children had many vices, no doubt, but their trials were such as you have never witnessed."

Speaking of those times Mr. Wheaton says:

"The influence of the Papal authority, though some-

times abused, was then felt as a blessing to mankind: it rescued Europe from total barbarism; it afforded the only asylum and shelter from feudal oppression." (Wheaton's *History of the Laws of Nations*, 33.)

And the Rev. John Lord, in his introductory essay to the *Chronicles of Sir John Froissart*, says:

"Moreover, the Papacy was a great central power, needed to control the princes of Europe, and settle the difficulties which arose between them. The Popes, whatever may have been their personal character, were conservators of the peace. They preserved unity amid anarchy, and restrained the impulses of passionate kings. Again, the Papacy in the best ages, is thought by many profound historians to have been democratic in its sympathies. It guarded the interests of the people: it preserved them from the violence of their oppressors: it furnished a retreat, in monasteries, for the contemplative, the suffering, the afflicted, and the poor."

There are many brave men who have much theoretic, but very little actual blood to shed upon the battlefield, who nevertheless complain loudly of the alleged errors of those who won the victory. Had they but been there, the difficulties might have been much greater than they appear in the distance. Men are generally brave at a safe distance, and generally virtuous, in the absence of temptation. It is easy to find fault. The less we know of a matter, the more fault we can find, in many cases. You have lived in the most favored age of the world, after the great art of printing was invented in 1444, and America discovered in 1492, and the consequent revival of literature, and the arts, and the extension of commerce; and you have still committed many grievous errors. True, you can boast of the number of your small

and diversified Churches, as the fox did of her numerous progeny, while the Catholic theory can only boast of one; but that is a lion."

Could these disorders destroy the office of Pope?

In reference to the effect of these disorders of the Popes, Mr. Campbell has a summary position as follows:

"If Christ gave any law of succession, that succession has been destroyed by a long continuance of the greatest monsters of crime that ever lived, and by cabals, intrigues, violence, envy, lust, and schisms so that no man can believe that one drop of apostolic grace is either in the person or office of Gregory XVI., the present nominal incumbent of Peter's chair." (Debate C. & P., 139.)

It will be seen that this language is sufficiently confident and strong, to sustain any sustainable position. But with deference to the logic and opinion of the learned debater, there are some reasons that seem to render doubtful the entire conclusiveness of his position.

The essence of this bold assumption is, that an individual officer could not only forfeit his right to the office, by his own misconduct, but he could go farther, and destroy the office itself. In other words, the office created by Christ — His own work — could be destroyed by the acts of individuals. This is a startling proposition, and leaves all future generations at the mercy of those who precede it. Under this theory, I cannot understand how Christ could be a Divine Lawgiver, when he created so poor an institution as to be within the power of men.

I had supposed that the continued existence of the Church, with all the offices created by Christ, was dependent upon His will, and not upon the personal virtues or vices of individuals. It may be, that though Our Lord did promise to protect the Church against the gates

of Hell, He did not mean to bind Himself to protect her against the gates of men. I had thought that both the creation of the office of Pope, and the consequent continuance of same, depended upon the will of the Founder of the institution, and not upon the will of men.

I am aware that inferior corporations, which are but the creatures of statutory enactments, may forfeit their charters by nonuser or misuser; because such is a part of the law of their creation. The misuser is the act of the controlling majority of the stockholders, and is, therefore, the act of all.

But this doctrine cannot apply to governments. Political governments may be changed at the pleasure of the founders; but the act of making such change is the act of the sovereign power. If it should happen that the President should commit treason, this would only forfeit his right to fill the office, but the office itself would remain unimpaired. The office was not created by him — was not his work — was made by the nation, and the Nation alone can unmake or destroy. If twenty Presidents in succession were to commit all the crimes possible, the office would still remain. The People might be induced to change the form of the government, but such change would be their act, not the act of those Presidents.

And is not this so with the Church? The Church is not an inferior corporation, but a supreme government. Christ is the head and founder of this kingdom, with subordinate officers under him. These officers were created by His act, and cannot be destroyed by the vices of subordinates. The office of Pope, if established at all, was created for some great and beneficial purpose. The Christians of all ages are equally entitled to these benefits, as subjects of the kingdom. They cannot be

deprived of them by the personal vices of preceding Popes. It would be unjust that they should. If Christ had been a mere fallible lawgiver, and had made a mistake in creating the office, He might be induced to abolish it; but having had an eye, as Mr. C. justly says, to all the future in all He did, such a supposition cannot be indulged.

The idea that a perpetual office, created by Christ himself, in His own Church, against which the gates of Hell shall never prevail, could be abolished by the vices of individual incumbents, is a supposition too hard for me to understand. If that office could be abolished by the vices of incumbents, every other office in the church could be destroyed in the same way, and unless re-established by Christ, the Church itself must fail, as no institution can exist without offices. If the Church is to be considered as an inferior corporation, and the office of Pope could be destroyed, then the whole corporation must fall. For such inferior corporations, by nonuser or misuser, do not forfeit the right to a particular office, but they forfeit their entire existence. The law would hardly mutilate and cripple the corporation, and still expect it, after thus being maimed, to perform the functions it failed to do, when whole and entire.

The whole force of the argument against the existence of the Papacy, upon the ground of the personal delinquencies of individual Popes, at intervals in the long line of succession, is based upon the essential error of confounding individual acts with official duties. It is true, that a man may be a good officer, and a bad man.

This distinction between personal and official conduct, I find admitted by most Protestant writers on some occasions, and then practically denied by them on others. We have seen the admissions of Mr. Campbell and Mr.

Rice, when arguing against each other. But when Mr. C. was debating with Bishop Purcell, he had not then discovered that Caiaphas could be a very good high-priest, though a bad man. Time improved his views.

When an officer fails to use his legitimate powers in proper cases, or when he abuses or perverts them, or usurps powers not belonging to the office, then he is a bad officer. His personal sins may injure his official usefulness indirectly, by reason of the destruction of confidence in his official conduct. But in the contemplation of the theory they are distinct, and are so, in point of fact, in many cases. Official delinquency does not necessarily follow from personal vices. The reason of this is plain. Men have different views of things, and there is a difference in criminality in different acts. A man may commit one class and not the other. All men commit some sins; and yet there are sins that few will commit. A man may be guilty of many personal sins, and yet regard his official obligations as sacred, because he considers that his personal vices affect himself mostly, while his official misconduct would affect others. When we assume that the official acts of a wicked clergyman are void, we certainly go beyond the truth. I knew a most eminent preacher, who baptized many persons in Mr. C.'s church, who has fallen away in California, giving pretty conclusive evidence that he never was sincere. Was the baptism administered by him void, in the contemplation of Mr. Campbell's theory? Or was the truth proclaimed by him, void, because falling from his lips? Is the true coin vitiated simply because it has passed through the hands of a rogue?

CHAPTER X.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE EFFECTS OF THE CATHOLIC SYSTEM,
IN THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE FAITHFULLY REDUCED
ITS TEACHINGS TO PRACTICE?

In estimating the effects of any system of religion, the only fair and just method would seem to be, to take those who humbly receive, and faithfully reduce to practice, its faith and morals, in their true spirit, as taught by the church herself. It is surely true, that individuals, under all systems, will err and come short of their duty. But after making a fair allowance for these cases, which no system can prevent, then take the best members of each communion, and see which has produced the greater number of saints, those noble and heroic souls, whose piety most resembles the spirits and acts of the early Church.

Character of the Reformers.

It is not my purpose, as the limits of my work would not allow me, to enter into a minute and full investigation of the character of the principal agents in bringing about the so-called Reformation, in point of that holiness, humility, and gentleness required by Christianity. I can only refer to the works of Dr. Milner and others, who have treated this subject at large. I gave the question the best examination I could do under the circumstances, and I must say, that the result was the conviction in my own mind, that the Reformers were not the

best models of Christian virtue. It seemed to me as an eminently just sentiment, that men who assumed to reform the entire Church should have been the best models of piety. The apostles were so.

I could not find in the lives, conduct, or language of the early reformers, any prominent and continued displays of that humility and disregard of self, which surely do constitute the most conclusive tests of personal piety, of the first order. I was much struck, upon my first examination, with the remark of Dr. Milner, that we had not the same reason to expect the same amount of personal virtue in those officers who follow one another by succession as we had in reformers. The account given by the Duchess of York, of her own conversion, is one of the most beautiful and simple statements I have anywhere met, and made a deep impression upon my mind when I first read it. It bears upon its face the sure marks of sincerity. It is found entire in the Duke of Brunswick's Fifty Reasons. This eminent lady says among other things: "And first I do protest in the presence of Almighty God, that no person, man or woman, directly or indirectly, ever said anything to me, (since I came out of England,) or used the least endeavor to make me change my religion. It is a blessing I wholly owe to Almighty God; and, I hope, the hearing of a prayer I daily made Him, ever since I was in France and Flanders. Where, seeing much of the devotion of Catholics, (though I had very little myself,) I made it my continual request to Almighty God, that if I was not, I might, before I died, be in the true religion. I did not in the least doubt but that I was so, and never had any manner of scruple until November last, when I read a book called 'The History of the Reformation, by Dr. Hoylen,' which I had heard very much commended, and

had been told if ever I had any doubt in my religion, that would settle me. Instead of which I found it the description of the most horrid sacrileges in the world; and could find no reason why he left the Church, but for these, the most abominable ones that were ever heard of among Christians: First, Henry VIII. renounces the Pope's authority because he would not give him leave to part with his wife, and marry another in her lifetime. Secondly, Edward VI. was a child, and was governed by his uncle, who made his estate out of church lands. And thirdly, Queen Elizabeth, who, not being lawful heiress to the Crown, could have no way to keep it but by renouncing a church that could never suffer so unlawful a thing to be done by one of her children. I confess that I cannot think that the Holy Ghost could ever be in such counsels; and it is very strange that if the bishops had no design (as they say) but restoring to us the doctrine of the primitive church, they should never think upon it till Henry VIII. made the breach, upon so unlawful a pretence." This lady afterwards says in another place: "After this I spoke severally to two of the best bishops we have in England, both of whom told me there were many things in the Roman Church which it were much to be wished we had kept, as confession which was no doubt commanded by God. That praying for the dead was one of the ancient things in Christianity; that, for their parts, they did it daily, though they would not own it; and, afterwards, pressing one of them very much upon the other points, he told me that if he had been a Catholic, he would not change his religion; but being of another church, wherein he was sure were all things necessary to salvation, he thought it very ill to give scandal by leaving that church wherein he received his baptism." The prelates referred to were Sheldon, Arch-

bishop of Canterbury, and Blandford, Bishop of Worcester.

In my examination of the history of the Reformation, I became satisfied that if we exclude from our consideration the opinions and conclusions of the most candid Protestant historians of the Reformation, and confine our attention to the main and undeniable facts they themselves record, and from these facts and our knowledge of men and things — their motives, passions, and actions — we will be forced to draw these conclusions: 1. That ambition, love of wealth, and thirst for distinction, had more to do with that event than religion itself. 2. That the bishops and clergy who joined the Reformation generally followed the lead of others, and very seldom went before.

If we look to England, for instance, we shall find, that of all the English bishops in the time of Henry VIII. the venerable Fisher was the only one who loved his religion well enough to die for it — that even when the clergy, either during his reign or afterwards, remonstrated against and opposed the proposed changes, their scruples were almost overcome, and they seldom resisted unto death. If we look to the continent, the same general result will follow. Luther, Melancthon, Bucer and others, granted the Landgrave of Hesse a dispensation to marry another wife, while he did not even put away the first. But when Henry VIII., who had been a zealous defender of the Pope, solicited a dispensation to put away his wife, and marry another, the Pope refused. And to the firmness of the Pontiff in resisting such a demand, is the success of the Reformation in England mainly to be attributed.

If we also take in connection the Catholic historians of that day, and put them also, side by side with the

Protestant, and take the great leading facts recorded by both, or sufficiently proved by one, when either omitted or denied by the other, there can be but little doubt, it occurs to me, as to the conclusion that must follow.

The Catholic clergy make much greater sacrifices than the Protestant.

I did not confine my attention alone to the conduct of both parties during the progress of the Reformation, in estimating the effects of the two systems. I looked also to general causes.

I found, upon examination, that the Catholic clergy made far greater personal and worldly sacrifices than the Protestant. They dedicate themselves to the ministry exclusively—they give up all temporal hopes—they debar themselves from marriage—they come under the commands of superiors—they go to the uttermost bounds of the earth when required—and they devote their whole lives to the single performance of their duties. The Catholic clergy look upon celibacy, when voluntary and for the greater glory of God, as a higher state than matrimony, and that it is revealed in Scripture.

Not only do they make greater sacrifices than the Protestant, in giving up so many privileges dear to human nature, and so highly esteemed by Protestant clergymen generally; but they take upon themselves a ministry far more laborious, painful, and hazardous. They have the preaching of the gospel to do as well as the Protestant; and besides this, they have, in addition, other duties to perform, still more arduous. The discipline of the church to which they belong is far more rigid and strict than that of the Protestant, and far more rigidly executed and enforced. For the Catholic clergyman is not only under the strict supervision of his superior, but

he is bound by his vows to perform his duty regularly.

As Christ enjoins constant prayer, the church requires all her clergy, from the sub-deacon to the Pope, daily to say the Seven Canonical Hours, consisting chiefly of scriptural Psalms and Lessons, which take up in the recital near an hour and a half in addition to their other devotions. In reference to fasting, the Church of England in her Homily iv. uses this language: "That we ought to fast is a truth too manifest to stand in need of any proof." In pursuance of this sentiment, that church enjoins in her Common Prayer Book the same days of fasting and abstinence with the Catholic Church; that is to say, the forty days of Lent, the Ember days, all the Fridays in the year, etc. But who observes these rules? Who keeps these days? Where is the Protestant to be found who imitates the example of old Paul and the early Church, in their frequent fastings? After all the ridicule which has been, or can be, thrown upon the practice of fasting, is it not founded in apostolic practice, in reason, truth, and right? Is it not beneficial, in and of itself? Is not man a creature that needs discipline at every step of his existence? Does he not need a trial — a test — a sacrifice — at all times? If he never could forget his duty — his dependence — his end; — in other words, if he was perfect without the use of discipline, it might not be so. And if the practice was not eminently beneficial, why did the early church observe it so much? There must have been some good reason for such a practice, in that day of light, certainty, and devotion.

Among the regular and painful duties of the Catholic clergyman, may be mentioned that of hearing confessions. This duty requires much time, labor, patience, study, and attention, as well as the qualities of clear dis-

crimination and mild firmness. Those outside the Church hardly can know how great the labor of the confessional is, and the amount of true patience required to discharge well its delicate and important duties. The Confessor must not only hear the narration of the vices and sins of each individual — those painful errors so humiliating to human nature — but he must suggest a remedy for the ten thousand diseases of distressed souls, who tell their sins, their mistakes, and their shortcomings to him. He has to deal with every variety of character and disposition — the selfish — the obstinate — the reckless — the passionate — the wayward — the idle — the overscrupulous — the imaginative — and the timid. In short, with every variety of character, from the repentant criminal to the humble saint. That such duties are onerous and painful, as well as laborious and responsible, would seem to require no proof with the sensible and reflective mind.

But the most painful and arduous, because the most irregular, the most sudden and dangerous, of the duties of the Catholic clergy, is the sick call. However poor, destitute, and unworthy the sick person may be, it is the imperative duty of the priest to go and see him. There can be no excuse short of the most insurmountable obstacle. The poor dying soul has a right to the last sacraments of the church. And the priest must go. It does not matter what may be the personal danger or inconvenience to himself, he must go. Through the darkness of midnight, beneath the withering summer's sun, or facing the scathing blasts of winter, through storm and calm, he must go. And when the pestilence and famine rage, he must still go. He has undertaken a sacred duty and has pledged his life to it. It must be discharged. He professed himself a true under-

shepherd of the flock, not a hireling, and he must lay down his life for the sheep, and not desert his flock in the hour of danger. His rigid Church permits no recreancy in the discharge of such a trust. He cannot flee. He must stand and die in the deadly breach. Did he not deliberately and voluntarily undertake to drink this cup, and must he not drink it? In this ministry he meets with tears, and groans and agonies. He has no smile to greet him, but the sweet smile upon the lips of the departing saint.

But besides these sacrifices and labors, the whole spirit of the Catholic system tends to merge the importance of individuals in that of the church. She is everything — individual fame and importance, comparatively, nothing. The Catholic clergyman knows that the important functions performed by him, are equally performed by others. He knows that the very vestments he wears, while performing his official duties, belong not to him, but to the church. The only advantage he can gain over others, is in the more faithful discharge of his duties; and this can only be obtained by increased labor and devotion.

Before he becomes a minister in the Catholic Church, if he is proud and vain of his own personal qualities and appearance, he had better not enter her ministry, if he expects to indulge these passions; for he will find himself checked and mortified at every step. If he has not the faith and moral nerve to face death deliberately in the discharge of his duty, at every step, when required, he had better desist. If he is self-willed, head-strong, obstinate, and fond of flattery, he had better not go there. If he is like Demosthenes, whose brilliant orations elicited only one response from the Athenians, "Let us rise and march against Philip;" but who, when Philip and his armies appeared, was among the first to flee, he

had better not undertake the daily sacrifices to be found in this laborious and devoted ministry.

These sacrifices, labors and dangers, are more conclusive evidences of deep and abiding faith and devotion, than all the eloquent discourses ever delivered. These are the decisive tests that cannot be disputed. They are simple, practical, and certain. In vain may the motives of such men be assailed. Such grapes do not grow upon thorns. Men do not voluntarily live poor, work hard, and die willingly, from improper motives. And when I see the Catholic clergy always at their posts, ready to die with the members of their suffering flocks, and so many of them thus falling martyrs to their duty, while so many Protestant clergymen (with some noble exceptions), so promptly act upon that saying, "A wise man foreseeth the evil, and fleeth therefrom," I cannot but draw the conclusion that there is, and must be; some great radical difference in the two systems. One seems studiously adapted to keep alive and perpetuate the apostolic spirit of self-abnegation, while the other is as studiously adapted to suppress it.

If an aspirant to the Protestant ministry be self-willed, and fond of his own opinions, among the five hundred sects in Protestant Christendom, he will be very apt to find one to suit him; but if not, he can organize a new sect to suit himself, and the older Protestant sects cannot consistently assail him upon the ground of innovation. If they do, he has ample materials for refutation and triumph. Let him join with one if he will, he is free to settle where he pleases, and to stipulate for his salary. If he be a man of talents, and a popular speaker, he can obtain a much larger salary. The matter rests with him and the particular congregation. The church does not interfere. If he be ambitious, and fond

of public meetings, the offices of the country are open to him, and hence we find them in our legislative halls, both State and Federal.

In short, the Protestant clergyman, preaches as long as he pleases — to whom he pleases — and if the ministerial duties do not please him, and anything preferable should offer, he is at liberty to lay aside the clerical profession at his own election. He lives as well, dresses as well, has all the comforts of home, wife, children, and friends; for the Protestant clergy, taken as a class, enjoy as many of the comforts of life as lawyers, physicians, and other professional men, while their labors are not more arduous, if so much so. In short, they have all the privileges of their lay brethren, and are required to make no more sacrifices. Such are the general facts with reference to the general Protestant ministerial system. There are some exceptions in reference to a portion of these particulars, in some of the Protestant churches. The Methodist clergy are under a more rigid discipline than those of other Protestant sects. There may be other exceptions as to some other parties.

These characteristics of the Protestant ministry have made it a mere profession, sought as a means of making a living, like other professions, in too many cases. It is a profession lucrative to some, and comfortable to the great majority. It is true, that the great majority of Protestant ministers cannot hope, if they wished, to make a fortune; but it is equally true that the great majority of every calling and profession cannot expect to grow rich; and that most men are well satisfied if they enjoy the ordinary comforts of life, without being rich. And it is very natural that a system of Christian ministry which requires very few, if any, sacrifices, affords comfortable livings, and imposes only moderate labor, must

necessarily contain a greater number of venal and unworthy ministers.

Is it, then, at all surprising, that in the hour of extreme danger, when the rigid test of acts, and not of words, is applied, so many Protestant ministers flee from their flocks, and leave them to take care of themselves? that when the sickly season approaches in New Orleans, the eloquent Mr. ———, the powerful Mr. ———, and the declamatory Mr. ———, should leave their flocks for a pleasure trip to the North, and return with the returning frosts in the Fall? or that so many should have left Norfolk during the prevalence of the Yellow Fever there?

The eloquent senator from Virginia, Hon. R. M. T. Hunter, in a speech made in 1855, in Virginia, uses this chaste and touching language:

“Deprive,” said he, “the Catholics of all the offices, bar them out from every avenue to political distinction, deny to them the opportunities which you have accorded to Infidels and Atheists; and when you have done it all, when you have placed their honest ambition to enjoy the honors and emoluments of political preferment under the ban of a ruthless proscription, your work is not yet finished. There will still remain offices for them. Yes, my friends, the sweet offices of Christian love will still be left, and in the midst of your persecutions, their bishops and priests, as in the recent pestilence in your Southern cities, will throng the hospitals and pest-houses, bringing succor and consolation to the poor victims of the plague. Aye, and their sisters of Charity will still brave the terrors of loathsome and infectious disease, will still wipe the death damp from the suffering brow, will still venture in where the courage of men shrinks back appalled, and will point the dying gaze through the

mysterious gloom of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, to the Cross and the Crucified."

I will also quote from a late able and manly letter, written by Judge Longstreet, a distinguished and worthy member of the Methodist Church. Speaking to the Methodist preachers of the Catholics, the Judge says:

"To hate their religion is to hate your own religion, which they adorn just at this time, much more than you do. 'No man that warreth,' says Paul, 'encumbereth himself with the affairs of this life.' The Catholic priest obeys this precept strictly. But where are you — some of you at least? Candidates for this, that, and the other office — going from beat to beat, and county to county, stumping it for votes — haranguing the multitude amidst thumps, and screams, and yells — firing at opposition, and almost coming to blows — telling vulgar anecdotes — suppressing truth — encouraging, if not spreading falsehood. These things are not done in a corner; and yet if any bishop, any Elder, any Deacon, any brother, any press of our church, has raised a warning voice against them, except my poor solitary self, and one old brother more, I have yet to learn who, when, or where. From the holiest chamber of my soul, I lift a prayer to God to have mercy upon us, and save our church from degradation and ruin. Brethren, I am not near done with you but I must stop. My powers of calm discussion are suspended. My heart and my eyes take up the cause of my perilled church, in utterances which you might appreciate, but which I cannot expose to the ridicule of an unfeeling world."

There is a melancholy vein of truth and sincerity running through this extract, that cannot be mistaken. But the state of things so feelingly deplored by the Judge, must inevitably flow from the theory of Protestantism,

sooner or later. It is one of the legitimate results. Let anyone read the history of the Protestant churches from the days of Luther down to this time, and he will find the same decline of the apostolic spirit. New Reformation will be constantly required. What Wesley did for the Church of England, some one else will have, sooner or later, to do for the Methodists.

In reference to the great mass of Protestants and Catholics, the difference between their observable conduct as Christians may not be great and may be very similar. I bear a most cheerful testimony to the personal piety of great numbers of Protestants with whom I have associated. So far as practical morality is concerned — that which regulates our conduct as citizens and neighbors — I have not found much difference among men of any denomination. I have found the qualities of kindness, sobriety, and integrity among many unbelievers, in a great degree of perfection. So far as the practice of that morality is concerned which renders men happy in a state of society, and prosperous as a community in this world, I apprehend there is no very marked difference among professed Christians of different denominations.

But the system of Christianity has a design beyond this. It looks not alone to man's happiness here. Virtues that alone produce an improved state of society, are not the principal objects of the system. Dr. Paley admits "that the teaching of morality was not the primary design of the mission" of Christ. In another place he says: "For however the care of reputation, the authority of public opinion, or even of the opinion of good men, the satisfaction of being well received, and well thought of, the benefit of being known and distinguished, are topics to which we are fain to have recourse in our

exhortations; the true virtue is that which discards these considerations absolutely and which retires from them all to the single internal purpose of pleasing God."

Reflections.

In reference to Mr. Campbell's claims to be a reformer, Mr. Rice remarks:

"I do not remember to have seen a man who pretended to religion of any kind, who did not consider himself rather more orthodox than others. This is a common weakness of human nature. It displays itself everywhere, and especially in men who imagine themselves to be great reformers, and believe all but themselves in serious error. If it be true, as my friend evidently thinks, that of all the world, he only, and those who agree with him, are in the light, whilst all Christendom grope in midnight darkness; it follows, as a necessary consequence, that he is one of the most orthodox men. There can be no doubt about it." (Debate 761.)

There is certainly great force and truth in this statement. But while it applies to Mr. Campbell, does it not equally apply to Mr. Rice? How stands the case with him? Did not Luther, his predecessor and head, make even greater pretensions than Mr. Campbell? Luther not only claimed that all "Christendom groped in midnight darkness," but he claimed the right to reform it, not only because he understood the Scriptures better than any other man who then lived, or had lived during the preceding thousand years, but also in virtue of an extraordinary mission, attested by miracles.

But how natural it is for men to lay down one rule for themselves, and another for others. Even the man who steals from others, complains bitterly if another steals from him. When Luther claimed the right to

reform the Church of Rome, he denied the right to Zuinglius and others to reform his Church. Calvin, who resisted Luther's pretensions to the entire right of reformation, and claimed an equal right for himself, nevertheless was instrumental in having Servetus burned for assuming the same right. And in all cases, the older Protestant sects declaim loudly against all new-comers into the common domain of Reformation. But in condemning others, they inevitably condemn themselves.

All the bad and immoral men in Christendom are, at least, infidels. They all belong to that class. The natural instincts of their conduct lead them there. There is something so utterly inconsistent between the belief of Christianity and the practice of gross immorality, that the two cannot be found together. Many men, however, who do not believe in Christianity, are yet practically good men as citizens and neighbors. But it is a great and gratifying fact, and a most powerful argument in favor of Christianity, that all the bad and wicked men are on one side, and at heart opposed to it, whatever may be their professions.

And so all the demagogues and fanatics in religion are Reformers, as Mr. Rice justly says. They are one and all the incessant advocates of the principle of private interpretation in the last resort. Demagogism and fanaticism in religion cannot, in the very nature of things, be found in the Catholic system. They cannot live there. There is no demagogical or fanatical oxygen in that atmosphere. There is nothing there for them to feed upon. Their necessary and indispensable food is found outside. There being nothing in the creed of that Church to reform, and nothing changeable in her infallible theory, such a watchword is not permitted to be used with reference to her articles of faith. It would

be as logical to speak of reforming the original law of Christ, as to speak of reforming a creed assumed to be infallible. Whoever, therefore, embraces that creed, cannot say reform in reference to the creed itself. It is a word unknown to a stable religious system of faith. And it is a gratifying fact, and a strong argument in favor of the Catholic system, that all the demagogues and fanatics in religion are opposed to it. They are invariably found all on one side, and against it.

While I cheerfully admit that all reformers were not demagogues or fanatics, truth compels me to say that I think most of them have been so. Admitting that I may be mistaken as to the proportion, yet it is clear that the Protestant principle produces the very and only food upon which they can live. While it produces this food in superabundance, it provides no efficient and consistent check to its use. Under the fundamental and supreme rule of individual and independent interpretation, what was allowed to Luther must be allowed to the Lutherans; and what was allowed to Calvin and his colleagues, must be allowed, under the same rule, to others. Mr. Campbell, had, therefore, the common right existing under, and guaranteed by, the rule itself. What check, then, is there upon demagogism and fanaticism in the Protestant theory? Nothing but the opinion and judgment of each individual. And in the war of contending demagogues and fanatics, how shall they decide? How have they decided in the past? Let facts and history answer.

Mr. Campbell's theory of Protestant union.

In reference to the difference among Protestants, Mr. Campbell says:

"There are one or two Protestant sects who differ in some important matters, and are as repugnant to each

other as are Jansenists and Jesuits in the Roman Church; but all Protestant sects unite in several acts of religious worship, in acknowledgment of the same code of morals, and in the positive institution of Christianity, such as the Lord's day, the Lord's supper, baptism, prayer, praise, etc. Sects and differences exist which ought not: but still they harmonize as much in their general and special bonds of union, as do the Romanists themselves. What are the Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, etc., but orders (or sects) called after the different saints?" (Debate C. & P., 175.)

The essence of this statement, if true, is based upon the principle of compromise or compensation. Mr. C. says, in substance, if we are divided, so are you. If this were true, it might well be asked, What, then, has your alleged Reformation accomplished? Has it produced any greater union?

But are the assumed facts here stated, true? What does a calm, fair, and dispassionate detailed examination of the differences existing among Protestants, show? Mr. C. says they agree in "several" particulars. That is true; but does this agreement in several things constitute that unity in speaking the same things, and in being perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, as St. Paul has it? All Christians, as well as Jews and Mohammedans, agree in several matters, but is this unity?

What, then, constitutes the unity contemplated by the law of Christ? Certainly, the same agreement that existed in the Apostolic Church. That Church was united in the SAME JUDGMENT in reference to ALL THINGS held material by the CHURCH HERSELF, and in the same CHURCH GOVERNMENT. And it must be obvious, that if there be a true visible Church,

that she must know herself, and must also know what requisites make up her faith; and that, consequently, when she decides that certain specified articles are necessary to her creed, and condemns others as untrue, that she must be right. On the contrary if a Church determines certain articles as essential to faith, and certain other articles as not essential, if there be error in either case, that Church cannot be in the right, and cannot, for that reason, be the true Church. If, then, two or more churches decide differently upon the same matter held by them to be essential to faith, it is clear that they cannot all be the true Church, or parts of the true Church. For example, when Mr. Campbell and his church hold that immersion alone is baptism, and that infant baptism, in any mode, is null and void, how can such a church be a part or a branch of a Church, which holds precisely the contrary? And when Mr. C. (as well as Mr. Breckenridge and other Calvinists) come to speak of Transubstantiation, Confession, and Absolution, as grievous errors of the Catholic Church, and make these tenets a most material portion of the reasons assigned to justify the alleged Reformation, how can they call the Lutherans, who hold Consubstantiation, Confession, and Absolution, a part of the true Church? For every sensible man must see, that all their objections against Transubstantiation apply to Consubstantiation; and that the latter, as the Sacramentarians insisted in the days of Luther, is more inconsistent with the Scripture than the former, conceding them both to be untrue. And how can they claim the Church of England as part of this great, but discordant, alleged true Church? She holds Confession and Absolution. And when the great Synod of Dort, representing the entire Calvinistic world, laid down those stern Calvinistic doctrines, and expelled the Remon-

strants from their communion, did both these parties belong to the same Church? If so, how did the Remonstrants bear the relation of "heathens and publicans" to the Calvinists? One party maintained predestination, election, and final perseverance, and the other the reverse; and the Synod held the Calvinistic doctrines as fundamental articles of faith, and the opposite tenets as heresy. The Methodists, and all the other five hundred sects, differ from each other in so many points deemed by them, and each of them, so far material, that they cannot be induced to unite under one system of Church government, having one acknowledged head; and how can they form parts of ONE Church? The Lutheran excommunicates the Calvinist—the Calvinist the Arminian—the Baptist the Paedo-Baptist—the Trinitarian the Anti-trinitarian—the Episcopalian the Independent—the believer in the Atonement the Unitarian—the Methodist the Anti-nomian; and yet, under this confused theory, these different parties, while they are thus excommunicating each other, are held to be but parts of the true Church, as were the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, and other places but branches of the Apostolic Church. A Church that does not know itself—does not know her faith—does not know the members of her own body, is still the true Church, under this most latitudinarian theory. What assistance does Christ, the alleged head of this confused Church, give to her, when she remains in this state of profound ignorance of her own faith? Is confused and contradictory ignorance an attribute of the one true Church of Christ? And if, on the contrary, it be assumed that this mongrel Church does know herself and her faith, then why is she continually excommunicating her own children for immaterial errors of mere opinion?

The Church of Christ is a kingdom, and a visible Kingdom — a united Kingdom. It has but one law for its government. This law requires uniform faith in certain fixed truths. How, then, can this visible kingdom have different governments, antagonistic to and independent of each other, and requiring faith in precisely opposite tenets, so that there is one faith for one part, and a different faith for another part? Did two or more communities, having entirely separate and independent governments, each acting for itself alone, ever constitute one government, because their citizens or subjects accidentally agreed in race, language, customs, laws, and manners, and in the forms of government? How can any associated body of men exist, without having one government? Do all the sovereign independent states of the civilized world constitute but one government, simply because they are all sovereign, and agree, substantially, in a great number of particulars? Unity of faith and unity of government must exist to constitute the one Church of Christ. Separate organizations, each acting exclusively for itself, and teaching its creed as its own, and for itself alone, never can form "the church" spoken of so often by St. Paul.

Mr. C. says that Protestants harmonize as much as Romanists themselves, and asks, "What are the Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, etc., but order (or sects) called after different saints?"

When I first read this statement, I was under the impression that these alleged differences among Catholics would compensate or balance the undeniable discords among Protestants. But there was one reflection which forced itself upon my mind with great power: that if this assumed state of case was in fact true, then it was clear that the true Church, if it existed at all, was in

the most wretched and disorganized state, very much like a clean neat apostasy from the true original faith. For my common sense assured me that this faith was an entirety—an indestructible whole, consisting of united parts—and that the moment one of these parts was lost, the identity of the Church was at once destroyed, and the promises of Our Lord had clearly failed. I could just as easily conceive of a house with nothing but the foundation, or of a steam engine consisting of nothing but the boiler, as of a true, visible, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, which had either denied a single true article of faith, or added a single false tenet to the true. If the Church could err in one essential particular, and still be the true Church, she could err in two or more; and the limit once passed, which was set by the inflexible, whole, and entire law of Christ, there could be no bounds fixed beyond which she could not go. Such an idea was utterly destructive of the whole theory, that Christ was a divine lawgiver. I could not understand how our Lord could ever have contemplated a mutilated Church. I could not think that he ever intended that one bone of her should be broken; but that while she might be wounded by her enemies for the moment, she would soon rise, like her Master, still sound, though scarred, and as triumphant and beautiful as ever.

But, I inquired, is it true, as Mr. C. states? What are the genuine facts?

In reference to the Jansenists and Jesuits, I found that they had discussed a theological question, taking different sides; and that the Church condemned the Jansenists, and that ended the matter with Catholics.

In reference to the Augustinians and other orders in the Church, I found that they were not sects in the just import of that word, but were only subordinate com-

munities, organized for different purposes, and having different disciplinary rules for their own direction, in reference to matters peculiar to each. I found that all the members of these different orders were required to believe every article of the creed, in the same way precisely, that every member of the Church was required to do. They had then the same faith, and were united in the same judgment, as were all the members of the Church. And not only so, but I found that not one of these orders could exist, without the express act and consent of the Church—that the Church reserved the power to suppress them at any time, and had exercised it in particular cases—that the matters peculiar to each order did not relate to faith at all, (which was a matter they could not touch,) and that they were in everything subordinate to the Church. I found also that the questions they were allowed to discuss were questions that all Catholics were allowed to discuss, being questions outside the creed—questions of expediency or of discipline, or questions which the Church had not settled by any decision; and that so soon as a decision was made on any question, the matter was ended.

I must confess, that in these orders I could see no divisions in the Church, any more than I could see divisions in the State, because subordinate municipal, and other corporations, were allowed to exist by express acts of the Legislature, prescribing and limiting their powers to such matters only as do not interfere or clash with the exercise of the legitimate powers of the State herself. These corporations are the mere creatures or agents of the State, deriving all their powers from her, existing by her will and pleasure, and are not, therefore, divisions producing discord in the government. And so with reference to these orders. They derived their existence from

the express act of the Church, exercised all their powers subordinate to her, and held their existence at her pleasure. These powers had no relation to faith, were expressly limited to matters indifferent, and were not allowed, in any way, to interfere with the powers of the Church. They are merely subordinate limited orders, organized for special purposes, and governed by disciplinary rules, first approved by the Church herself. I could see no discord in these orders, nothing antagonistic to the Church, unless I could see discord between a subordinate and his superior.

In reference to Protestant divisions, I found the case far different in two great and essential particulars: 1. They differed as to matters of faith, holding precisely opposite views in reference to the same matter. 2. They each had entire separate and independent Church organizations, acting each alone for itself, and acknowledging no common superior. In other words, they were independent associates, having no visible connection. The Methodists, for instance, formally decide all questions of faith and practice for themselves, and from this decision there is no appeal to any other power on earth. So of all the others. They are no more connected in government (if such a thing exists among them at all) than independent States. Whatever similarity of views, in reference to some points, may exist among them, arises not from their theories of organization. Each association being separate and independent, there can be no subordination among them, and no union.

From his language in his debate with Bishop Purcell, one would be compelled to infer, that these divisions were very slight, except as to the "one or two Protestant sects" not specified; and even as to these, they were not greater than the alleged divisions among Catholics.

Among other things they all united in, as stated by Mr. C., was baptism. When we look to his debate with Mr. Rice, and see the grounds he there took, and the language there used, we begin to see the mighty chasms that lie between the professed views of different Protestant sects. Even in Mr. C.'s view, there are some things so different from most other Protestants, that they constitute a mighty wall of separation. In the debate with Mr. Rice, two of the propositions maintained by Mr. C. were: "Baptism is for the remission of past sins," and immersion of a proper subject "is the only apostolic or Christian baptism." Putting these two propositions together, and drawing therefrom the inevitable conclusion, the Church that practices sprinkling and infant baptism, has no baptism, according to Mr. Campbell, and her members who have been thus sprinkled, no remission of past sins. How such could be saved, or how, consistent with his views, he could call such a church either the true Church, or even a part of it, I am not able to perceive. As the overwhelming majority of Protestant sects were in this condition, those left as parts of the true Church were certainly few.

After all the confusion that has been thrown over this subject by loose and uncertain language, arising from confused thought, or from a desire to avoid a difficulty, nothing can, it occurs to me, be plainer than this; that the Protestant inquirer, under his rule, must be certain of two points before he can be certain that he is right:

1. He must be certain as to the *identity* of the code—he must know that the Bible is the written, and only, Word of God.

2. He must know that *he* has correctly construed it.

If he does not know both these points with certainty, he does not know his faith with certainty. How then

can it be true, as asserted by Dr. Spring, that "the man who implicitly receives the Scriptures as the infallible rule of faith, cannot doubt whether any of his religious opinions are true?" Does the learned Divine mean to assert the proposition, that he who so implicitly receives the Scriptures cannot misconstrue them? Or, does he mean to say, that while he does so misconstrue them, that the simple fact of his so receiving the Bible, will make him certain, even while he is in the wrong? Or does he mean to take the clean neat position, that, while all Protestants profess to receive implicitly the Scriptures as their infallible rule of faith, they only so receive them who properly construe them? If so, does he mean then to say, that all Protestant sects but one, do not so receive them? Or does he mean to admit, that while numbers, **or even** the majority of each sect, so receive the Bible, and yet give it such discordant constructions, they cannot still doubt whether any of their religious opinions are true? In other words, that the simple fact of so receiving the Scriptures is, in and of itself, efficient to remove all doubt from the minds of all those holders of opinions so contradictory? As if the fact that twenty different lawyers all agreed as to the indentity of the statutes, would make each one certain that his own construction of them was right, when different from that of each of the other nineteen.

If the position be true, that such a reception of the Bible is efficient to produce such certain conviction, is it not clear that it does so without reason and against the truth? What sort of a rule is that which produces this fatal repose, while believing the most contradictory tenets, and holding the most opposite opinions? "There is a way which seemeth to a man right, but the end thereof is death."

I cannot understand the proposition in any other sense. The language is plain, clear, and certain. If a man implicitly receives the Scriptures, he cannot doubt whether any of his religious opinions are true, whatever those opinions may be. This is but another struggle to find a substitute for the Catholic certainty. As the same learned divine had before said, "The human mind reluctantly rests short of certainty. Indeed, without this it does not rest at all," he was bound to propose some rule which would produce this certainty, or leave his readers in the dark.

When I first read the dissertation of Dr. Spring, upon the Rule of Faith, I was a Protestant. His statement that the human mind does not rest at all without certainty, I could not but admit as unequivocally true. But the rule he gave me to attain it gave rise to the most serious reflections. After examination and consideration, I became satisfied that his position was fatally erroneous in one of two particulars; namely: either it could not produce that certainty; or if it did, then this certainty was not founded upon reason or truth, but was a mere temporary certainty, that might do to live upon, but would never do to die by.

While engaged in this examination, and during its progress, my reflections ran substantially in this way:

"All Protestants profess to receive the Bible implicitly, as Dr. S. requires: and yet I have no doubt it is true, as he states, that

"Great multitudes, who have been religiously educated, and more who have not been so, while they have a prevailing belief that the Scriptures are a divine revelation, have by no means the conviction of certainty on this great subject." While I must believe this, I am also compelled to believe that a large portion of the members of

the various Protestant parties are sincere, and do implicitly receive the Scriptures, as the rule of Dr. S. requires. And yet, while they do so receive it, they unequivocally disagree in its interpretation, and hold the most opposite doctrines. Although Dr. S. speaks of a remarkable uniformity in their views, where can this remarkable uniformity be found? He has, indeed, referred me to the early creeds, drawn up mostly within the first fifty years of the alleged Reformation, by only two parties of Protestants, Lutherans and Calvinists, and before they had divided into so great a number of sects as now exists; and even in these creeds the discrepancies were great and manifest, and were held material by the parties themselves, at the time the creeds were made. The Lutherans held the Sacramentarians as heretics, heathens, and publicans, and not as brethren of the same church. And the Calvinists so held the Lutherans for many years, and then only permitted them to communion about the time the theory of an invisible Church was invented. When I look into their creeds, these discordant views are held as doctrines of Scripture; and there is no marked distinction in each creed to show where the fundamental doctrines end, and the indifferent opinions begin. If I consider all the points of difference between Protestants, or between the principal sects, as matters indifferent, and this contrary to their own creeds, how much will there be left of fundamental Christianity? For instance, can I say a man has free will, or that he has it not? — or that he will certainly persevere because predestinated, or that he may fall — that Christ is really present in the Eucharist, or that He is not — that infant baptism is valid, or that it is void — and so of every other difference, and yet all these views be held as matters indifferent? Can I say that Christ has made no

revelation upon these points of difference? If I say He has, by what sort of logic can I say His revelation is unimportant? Why revealed, if not to be believed? And how can a mere fallible interpreter mark the line that separates the revealed fundamental, from revealed, but immaterial, doctrines? If, then, these various sects differ in fundamental doctrines, it is clear they cannot all be right. It is equally plain they cannot form parts of the true visible Church. She ever must be a unit, with the same faith, and the same government. And if, on the contrary, these sects agree in fundamentals as asserted, then why do they not unite? What excuse can be given for ruinous divisions, so much deplored by Dr. Spring himself, as well as other Protestants, when they only differ about trifles? Or is it in the wise and irrevocable purpose of the Great Redeemer, that division and discord should be written, in letters of living light, upon the front of every sect that has ever separated from that Church which holds the governing principle of authority, from the beginning of Christianity even to the present time?

Despite the statement of Dr. Spring, is it not palpable that, while Protestants have had great difficulty in implicitly receiving the Scriptures, they have had still greater difficulty in their construction, as the five hundred sects in Protestant Christendom do most abundantly show? Under the Protestant fundamental rule, I must construe the Bible for myself. God, according to the rule, has made my mind the only tribunal. If I trust to the opinions of others, and believe upon their authority, while my own mind does not itself understand the proof, then I violate the will of God, and become subordinate to an independent equal. I can, therefore, take nothing upon authority. I must examine, and be

myself convinced in reference to each particular point. Who am I? A mere fallible man. My judgment and my opinion I cannot rely upon, any more than upon the judgment and opinion of any other man of the same sincerity, diligence, opportunity, and capacity. It is true, the rule itself compels me to rely upon myself; but so far as correctness and certainty of construction are concerned, my chance to be right would be just as great in following the judgment of another person. The fact that it is my opinion, ought not to give me any more assurance of its truth, than the fact that it is the opinion of another individual. Unless I deceive myself by self-love and personal vanity, this must be true. If I should deceive myself, would that deceive the great and just Judge? What have I to gain by self-delusion but my own ruin?

I am not only thrown upon my own judgment by the Protestant rule itself, but by another overwhelming consideration. For if I adopt the creed of any one Protestant sect, (and I cannot adopt any two or more of them,) I find the overwhelming majority, even of Protestants, against me. If I consult all the sects that have separated from the Church of Rome, from the days of Simon Magus to those of Luther, I find each and every one, without one solitary exception, against me. When I go to the Catholic Church, I find the overwhelming majority of all professed Christians, saints, and martyrs, of every age in her exclusive communion — and they too are all against me.

I am, then, invincibly thrown back upon my own individual fallible judgment; for if I rely upon authority at all, under the Protestant rule, which admits of no infallibility, then I must take the voice of the majority, and I cannot, upon any principle of common sense, prefer

the authority of one, to that of ten persons, all equals. I must stand unsupported, "solitary and alone."

I was always told the Bible was a plain book, easily understood. But after all, I often thought I could see some things hard to be understood, and yet that must be understood. And whether other Protestants find these things hard to understand or not, the fact is palpable, that they are always explaining and re-explaining this plain Bible; and what is still more surprising, they never can explain it alike. They seem to explain the meaning quite away. The more loudly and the more unanimously all Protestants continue to assert that the Bible is a very plain book, and easily understood, the more utterly at a loss I am to understand why it is they differ so much about so plain a matter as the construction of so plain a book. There must be some deep, fundamental, and efficient reason for this. There is a great and radical wrong somewhere. Is it because Protestants are too learned? Or is it because they study the Bible too much?

I am but a man. I am no wiser or better than others. I cannot reasonably have any more confidence in my individual judgment and construction of the Scriptures, than I can in those of any other man of equal capacity, sincerity, and means of information. Certainty I must have, or I cannot rest. Where then can I find it?

Shall I be compelled to seek elsewhere than in any Protestant communion for that consistency, system, and unity, that did unquestionably dwell in the Church of Old? Must I be driven, at last, into the alleged "Man of Sin"—the "Great Apostasy"—the best-abused Church in the world? That Church against which charges enough, and grievous, are made, if true, to sink a universe? The alleged false—the base—the corrupt—the venal—the cruel—the apostate Church? The

oldest, and yet the most unpopular — the most hated — the most suspected — the most despised — of all the Churches of Christendom? Is it possible that I must go there to find that faith, and that certainty, that will satisfy a hungry, but honest soul? How can I endure the thought of confessing my sins to a mere man? My pride says I cannot, but grace whispers “you can, if truth requires you.” And so I will, if it is right. I resolve to follow truth, wherever it may lead me. There’s reason and sense in truth. There’s logic and honesty in it. There is certainty and there is consistency in it. Let me only know it. If it can be found in the Old Church, I go there. The consequences I will take. If such a step subjects me to censure, I will bear it. I would rather suffer in this world than in the next. It may subject me to many evils for a long time.

What of that? Unlimited space is wider than the world, and eternity longer than life. Heaven and all that heaven means are worth a struggle — a sublime and manly struggle. Was Christianity ever designed to be popular with the mass of evil in this world? Does it indulge men’s passions? Does it pamper pride? Does it flatter men in any way? Oh! no. It could never have cost so much if it did. He who wins heaven must struggle. He must be prepared to resist the onset of earth. He must expect its dire opposition. He must fight.

The faith of the old Church after all this mighty mass of acrimonious and passionate accusation, may be the pure and holy faith once delivered to the saints. She has always, and at all times, and in all places, for more than fifteen hundred years, as conceded by many of her enemies, claimed it to be true. It may be that her very firmness in resisting all ambitious novelties, has brought

upon her the unceasing opposition of all sectaries, in every age and clime, of whatever tenets and character; and her very consistency, her beauty, her invincible courage, may have brought against her the malice and ridicule of all infidels, past or present. If we concede that she is the true church, for the sake of the argument only, (and she may be such, as the thing is possible,) then would not the bitter and relentless opposition of all the proud, the vain, the ambitious, be levelled against her? Would not every demagogue in religion — every wild enthusiast — every man of a cold, suspicious disposition — every self-willed individual, be against her? Did not our Lord say, “Woe unto you when all men speak well of you: for so did their fathers of the false prophets”?

There is something remarkable in the history of this venerable old Church, even as stated by her enemies. Her continued existence for so long a period, under this alleged accumulation of errors, is one of the most remarkable circumstances in the world's history. The more errors are charged upon her, and the more bitterness there is displayed in attempting to sustain these allegations, the more difficult it is to account for this remarkable moral phenomenon. If, indeed, she be the true Church, then her unfailing existence is accounted for; because the promises of that poor, despised Nazarene never yet did fail. Slander never did make a modest charge — malice always lays it on thicker and thicker — and hatred forever overshoots the mark.

I will, then, look into these charges calmly and dispassionately. I will endeavor to make a fair and just allowance for individual human frailty. I will judge the past by the circumstances existing in the past. I will try to place myself back in the olden time. I will interrogate the distant ages gone by. I will commune

with the venerable departed. I will judge them by that charity wherewith I wish to be judged. At least so far as my poor abilities will allow. I will then make up my mind, and upon that conviction I will act. I will not halt between two opinions. My face is set for the truth, and when I find, I mean to follow it.

CHAPTER XI

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

The Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence, and the Protestant doctrine of the real absence of the body of Christ in the Lord's supper, are as much opposed to each other as any two precise opposites can possibly be imagined. There can be no medium between the two — no possible middle ground. Christ is either present or absent. If present, the Catholic is right — if absent, then the Protestant is right.

If the Catholic doctrine be true, it is a tender, sublime, and awful dogma — if false, a monstrous invention — a pure fabrication. If not in the Church originally, and not among the doctrines once delivered, it must have been introduced as a whole, and not in piecemeal. There could, from the very nature and reason of the thing, have been no middle doctrine — no shades of opinion, gradually preparing the minds of Christians for the reception of this great perversion of the true faith. It was one bold leap from the well-understood and generally received doctrine of the real absence, to that opposite, so hard to flesh and blood, the Real Presence.

The first portion of Scripture relied upon by the Catholic, is found in that wonderful chapter, the sixth of St. John. The first twenty-five verses are taken up in giving a history of the stupendous miracle of Christ in feeding the multitude, and His subsequent occupations until the next day. On the second day, the crowd again

came around Him, and His discourse to them commences at the 26th verse, and extends to the close of this long chapter.

It was the practice with our Lord and his apostles to suit their discourses to the circumstances in which they were placed. The Jews had witnessed the miracle of feeding the five thousand; and if our Lord ever intended to promise to give His body and blood to his followers, there is no time mentioned in the history of His labors more appropriate than the one mentioned in this chapter.

In reference to the sense of this chapter, most Protestants insist that it relates to faith in Christ, though several distinguished writers, as Calixtus, Hackspan, and Groenenburg, out of England, and Dr. Jeremy Taylor and Dr. Sherlock of England, concede that the larger portion relates to the Eucharist, though they deny the literal sense. Catholic writers contend that about the 48th verse the Saviour passes to another topic, by a very easy and natural transition. Dr. Wiseman has given very conclusive reasons to prove that the transition commences at the 48th verse. For myself, it seems to be true, that the transition not only takes place at that verse, but that both the main subjects of the discourse are clearly alluded to in verse 27.

The multitude who had been fed, declared, "this is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world;" and such was their admiration of our Lord, that they would have taken Him by force, and made Him a King. (14, 15.) They seem to have believed in him as one eminently competent to be a temporal sovereign; and that, as the kingdom of the second Moses, the Messiah, was to be a temporal kingdom, it would be one of the vocations of Christ to furnish them with food, and for this reason they sought Him, and not because they saw

the miracles, (26.) The Jews had a tradition among them, that the Messiah, among other points of resemblance to Moses, was, like him, to bring down manna from heaven.

The existence of this tradition and its belief among the Jews, is shown from the facts historically stated in this chapter. They first followed Him into the desert, "because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased." (2) Although they had witnessed these miracles on them that were diseased, they never once thought of making Christ a King, until after the miracles of the loaves and fishes. But upon witnessing this peculiar miracle, they seem at once to have considered Him as sent of God as a temporal Sovereign, a part of whose vocation would be to supply His people with food, as God had done, through the ministry of Moses, in the wilderness. All the circumstances taken in connection with the miracle they saw, were doubtless the reasons that induced them to seek to make him a King, and to take shipping and to follow him to Capernaum, and not the expectation of obtaining another meal, as some Protestant writers have supposed. Such a motive would seem wholly inadequate to produce such a result; and such a position is inconsistent with the fact, that they so ardently desired to make Him a King.

This tradition is the reason why the Jews referred to the manna in the 31st verse. They ask Christ for a proof of His commission, and then, without the slightest seeming reason, refer to the manna in the desert. What connection this matter could have with the question they asked could not well be seen without a knowledge of the existence of this tradition.

The Jews under the influence of this opinion, and, no doubt, still desiring to make Christ a King, that they

might be fed by His power and bounty, pursued Him the next day. Adapting His discourse to the state of their opinions, (as St. Peter did, when he told them to repent and be baptized, without mentioning faith, because they already believed,) it seemed that our Lord had two main points to propound: 1. That He was the Son of God in whom they must believe. 2. That it was no part of His mission to give them perishable food but the imperishable food of his own body and blood. Both these points are stated in one verse and in one sentence. (27.)

It was natural and appropriate that our Lord should first inform the Jews that He understood their views and motives, and that these were erroneous, before propounding His own doctrines. After telling them that they sought him, not because they had witnessed the miracles, but because they had eaten of the loaves and fishes, He very naturally, at this place, warns them not to labor for that meat which they so much regarded, but for that imperishable meat that He would give them; and then confirms His power to fulfill His promise with that emphatic expression, "for him hath God the Father sealed."

The first point to be discussed (though secondly stated,) was the proposition that He was the Son of God, and commissioned by Him; and that, as such, they were to believe in him. When He gave them sufficient evidence of His true character, they were bound by the plainest principles of right reason to believe Him upon His authority alone, and to receive every doctrine propounded by him, however hard that saying might be. The only proper inquiry the Jews could make was that which they did make in verse 30. That being answered and proved by what they had seen and heard before and at that time, they were bound to believe, without doubt, all that he might require them to believe. If He was the

Christ, then He was legitimately entitled to unlimited confidence. And when He performed the miracles before their eyes, He conclusively established His character and veracity, and, therefore, His account of Himself they must receive as infallibly true.

Our Lord, in verse 27, does not define what he meant by meat that should endure to eternal life, except simply to state its quality in contrast with perishable food. He does not state it in terms calculated to arouse prejudice in the beginning of His discourse, and thus close the ears of his hearers against His doctrines. He does not then say in what it shall consist. He merely states the heads of His discourse in such a way as to create no prejudice, and yet show what two main points would come under discussion. The reader will observe that in verse 27, our Lord promised that He will give this imperishable meat, and that in verses 51 and 55, He says He will give His flesh, and that His flesh is meat indeed. In both cases He speaks of a future gift, which He Himself will give; showing that the same thing is alluded to in all these verses.

It must be conceded that the doctrine of the Real Presence is a hard and revolting doctrine to flesh and blood, and especially so to the Jews, as we shall see. It was then proper in itself that Christ should select an occasion when some miracle, or other great event, would form the proper introduction to this unpleasant topic. And not only so, but an occasion when the Jews were well-disposed towards him. On this occasion all these circumstances concurred. The Jews, in multitudes, had fed upon the miraculous food created by the Son of Man — they had hailed Him the day before as a Prophet — in their enthusiasm they had sought to make Him a King, by force; and they followed Him beyond sea, and sought

Him until they found Him, and the respectful manner in which they addressed Him, shows the state of their feelings towards Him. It is true, they entertained erroneous views and opinions in reference to the object of their admiration, but that was the very time to correct these errors of opinion. In justice to them, it was the opportune moment. If they could not hear that hard saying at this time, they never could hear it. No wonder, then, that those disciples who could not hear that doctrine on this occasion, "walked no more" with their deserted Lord.

As I take it our Lord proceeds, from the 29th to the 47th verses inclusive, to teach the great doctrine, that He is the Son of the Father, and the general necessity of faith in him, as such. In answer to the allusion made by the Jews to the manna, and after having previously told them, in verse 29, that the work of God was to believe on Him whom he hath sent, He tells them that His Father giveth them the true bread from Heaven, and then proceeds to define the meaning in which He there used the word bread, by saying, "For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven." "I am the bread of Life." The Jews understood Him correctly, for they did not inquire "how can this man be bread?" but they did say, "How is it, then, that he saith, I come down from heaven?" (42.) They disbelieved the assumed fact that He came down from heaven, but they did not misunderstand the sense of His words.

It will be seen that there are several marked differences in the language of that part of Our Lord's discourse, from the 29th to the 47th verses inclusive, and that from verses 48 to 58 inclusive; and these peculiarities are such as to show a change of topic.

Our Saviour, after having explicitly defined the word

bread as figurative of Himself, proceeds to speak exclusively of faith in the next fourteen verses; and it is very remarkable that in this part of His discourse, he carefully avoids the use of the phrase eating Him, and does not even use the expression to eat the bread of life. This care in avoiding any reference to eating Him, shows how clearly our Lord kept within the limits of the first topic. From the moment that He begins to use literal terms, He proceeds to speak of His doctrine under the phrases "cometh to me," "believeth in me," (which mean the same thing,) until verse 47, which is a complete summing up of that part of His discourse.

But His language after this is very different; for He not only speaks of eating this bread, but of eating His flesh. It was not unusual with our Lord to repeat the same thing a number of times in succession, and after each repetition, to introduce new matter. In the tenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, He repeats the phrase, "I am the door." So, in the fifteenth chapter, the expression, "I am the true vine," and then says His Father is the husbandman. And again, "I am the vine," and then proceeds to say, "You are the branches." So, in the 23rd chapter of Matthew, He repeats that withering phrase, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," seven or eight times. In the chapter under consideration, He says, "I am the bread of life," (35.) and then proceeds to speak of faith in Him as the Son of God. Having summed up in verse 47, He says again, "I am the bread of life," (48.) He then proceeds to state the want of a living principle in manna, (49.), and then puts in strong contrast with it the bread of life, (50.) And He repeats again (51.), in language more emphatic, "I am the living bread," and proceeds to introduce new matter in these words: "And the bread

that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Our Lord, previous to verse 51, had asserted that He was the bread of Life—that He came down from Heaven—that a man may eat of that bread and not die; and all these propositions are repeated in verse 51, preparatory to the definition He was about to give of the new sense in which He used the word bread, as figurative of His real flesh. In verse 32, He speaks of the quality of the bread, calling it the "true bread," and then defines what it is by saying: "For the bread of God is He which cometh down from Heaven." So here he speaks of the quality of the bread (50 and 51.), and then defines what it is in language of very similar form.

"For the bread of God is he "And the bread that I will
which cometh down from give is my flesh."
heaven."

Now the word bread, in both these extracts, is used in a figurative sense, but not in the same figurative sense. There are two separate and distinct definitions given—the first, of Christ as a Lawgiver or teacher, and the second, of His real flesh. These two definitions would be idle, if they meant the same thing. And if these definitions give us different meanings, it is clear that when the second one was given, there was a change of topic.

It will also be observed, that in the first definition, the pronoun "he," the nominative after the verb "to be," is not a figurative, but a literal expression; so, the nominative "flesh," in the second, is not figurative but literal. Our Lord could not be supposed to use the same figurative word to represent Himself literally in one portion

of His discourse, and in another part of the same discourse, to represent His flesh figuratively — thus not only using the same word under similarly constructed sentences in a different sense, but using a figurative expression to represent a figurative substance. It would seem perfectly clear, that the word flesh was used by our Lord literally.

If a speaker use words in any known sense, he is not bound to define the sense in which he uses them, unless there be some special circumstances requiring it. If, on the contrary, he use known terms in unknown senses, he is compelled, by every consideration of justice to himself and his hearers, to define the new sense in which he uses the same. Our Lord seems to have acted upon this just rule. Although it was common among the Jews to use the words bread or food for wisdom or doctrines, it was not so common to use these words for a lawgiver or a teacher of doctrines. Our Saviour was, therefore, careful to show the exact sense in which He used the word, in the two different figurative senses stated.

The same matter further considered.

It will also be observed that in the first portion of our Lord's discourse, while speaking of Himself under the image of bread, he represents this as given by the Father; but after verse 47, He speaks of the food now described, as being given by Himself. This marked difference in the giver, shows a difference in the gift. There could be no ground for this difference, if faith only is intended; but if there be a transition to a real eating, the whole is clear. While we contemplate Christ as the object of our faith, and as the Sent of God to redeem the world, he is justly said to be given by His

Father. "God so loved the world," etc. But when we view Him as giving us His own flesh to eat, it is more correctly said to be by His own love for us.

There is another difference between the language of the two portions of our Lord's discourse, still more marked and explicit.

That the same words, by usage, may have both a literal and figurative meaning, must be conceded. That the meaning of a speaker must be determined by the usage existing at the time, and not by that existing afterwards, must also be clear. That it is the duty of every honest speaker, who uses words or phrases having a known signification, in a new and unknown sense, to define this new sense, must also be conceded. If, therefore, the phrase, to "eat the flesh" of any one, had any fixed figurative as well as literal meaning, at the time it was used by Christ, then the Jews and disciples could only understand this expression in one or the other of those established meanings. They could have no right to understand them in a new or unknown sense, unless Christ had given an express definition, as He did of the word bread, or unless the context was so clear as to leave no doubt. What right had they to put an unknown sense upon a known phrase, with fixed meanings? If hearers could put such a construction upon the language of a speaker, there would be no bounds to this licentious privilege. Once beyond the control of the only rules governing the sense of words and phrases, they are at sea without chart or compass.

If the phrase, to eat the flesh of anyone, had, besides its literal, an established metaphorical sense, then how must the Jews have understood it? If, on the contrary, it had more than one metaphorical meaning, how must they have understood it? In the first case, they could

only understand it either in its literal sense, or in the only metaphorical sense known to the language. In the second, they could only understand it in its literal sense, or in one of its metaphorical senses.

Now what was the metaphorical meaning of this expression? In all cases when used metaphorically, it meant to do a person some grievous injury, principally by slander or false accusation. The following are examples of its figurative meaning in Scripture:

“While the wicked draw near against me to eat up my flesh.” (Ps. xxvii, 2.) “Why do you persecute me, and are not satisfied with (eating) my flesh?” (Job xix, 22.) “Who also eat the flesh of my people.” (Micheas iii, 3.) “The fool foldeth his arms together and eateth his own flesh.” (Ecc. iv, 5.) I am not aware of any other passages in the Old Testament where this expression is used in a figurative sense. In all the above cases, the idea of inflicting upon the person a grievous injury is clearly conveyed.

The following examples are found in the New Testament: “Shall eat your flesh as it were fire.” (St. James v, iii.) “But if you bite and devour one another.” (Gal. v, 15.)

Regarding the meaning of this phrase among the Arabs, and in the language which our Lord spoke, Dr. Wiseman, in his lectures on the Eucharist, p. 73-81, has shown conclusively, that it has only the same figurative meaning.

The differences between the language of the two portions of our Lord's discourse, are so marked and clear that we are forced to concede, not only a change of topic, but we are forced to take the expression, “eat the flesh of the Son of Man,” in its literal sense, or we must take it in the metaphorical sense of calumniating our Lord.

The reason upon which this usage among so many nations is founded, would seem to be plain. The metaphorical sense of a term always comes after the literal; and, for that reason, will participate of its character. If the literal sense convey a harsh meaning, the figurative will do the same. If one knows the literal meaning of a term, he can almost at once fix upon its metaphorical sense. To literally eat the flesh of a person, is naturally a revolting idea. Therefore, when such an expression is used metaphorically, it conveys the same harsh meaning. For this reason, we find no examples, even among classical writers, where a person is figuratively said to eat the flesh of another, except those which convey the harsh idea of the literal sense. (See Dr. Wiseman's Lec., p. 85.)

If we take the expression, to eat the flesh of Christ, in the only figurative sense known at the time, and say that such was His meaning, His words reduced to literal language would stand about thus: "Except ye do some grievous injury to the Son of Man, ye have no life in you." This interpretation must at once be rejected; and this being true, we are forced to take the expression in its literal sense, or in some new and unknown, and undefined figurative sense. And what right have we to do the latter?

But there is another consideration of very great importance. Our Lord certainly intended to be understood, otherwise he would have been making an idle display of words. He was putting forth an important doctrine, which He could not mitigate or soften, however repugnant to human pride or prejudice. He could not but state the truth; and whether the truth was accepted or not, His practice was always to state it. "If I shall say that I know him not, I shall be like you, a

liar." (John viii, 55.) While, therefore, our Lord would never soften His doctrines, he would hardly resort to repulsive figures of speech to inculcate pleasing doctrines. Faith in the death of Christ is one of the most cheering doctrines of Christianity; and to inculcate this doctrine would our Lord say, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," thus resorting to a revolting figure of speech without the slightest necessity?

There are certainly some mutual rights existing between a speaker and his hearers. The object of every just speaker is to elucidate, not to confuse his subject — to enlighten, not to insult his audience. He will necessarily be led by this consideration, to adapt his mode of instruction to the capacity and feelings of his hearers. This was the uniform practice of St. Paul, who was "all things to all men;" and of St. Peter when he said, "I know, brethren, that you did it through ignorance, as did also your rulers." This was also the course of our Lord Himself.

The question then arises, were the ideas of eating human flesh and drinking blood revolting to the Jews? If they were so, then we cannot suppose our Saviour to resort to them as images of cheering doctrines; nor can we suppose He used these expressions at all, unless the doctrine He inculcated necessarily compelled Him to use them for the purpose of propounding the exact truth itself. If the literal sense given by the Jews was correct, then the use of these expressions was clearly necessary. And to show that these expressions were revolting to the Jews, I need only to refer to the following texts:—

Levit. iii, 17; vii, 26; Gen. ix, 4; Deut. xii, 16; xv, 23; Levit. xvii, 10; i Kings xiv; Ez. xxxiii, 25; Judith xi,

10-12; Wisdom xi, 7; Is. xlix, 26; Jer. xix, 8, 9; Acts xv, 29.

It was doubtless this revolting idea which the Jews had of eating human flesh and drinking blood, that induced many of the disciples to "walk no more" with our Lord, and to disbelieve the doctrine He taught. They considered it not only impossible, but contrary to the law of Moses. The law of Moses having been given by God, and they not understanding its temporary character, and looking upon the literal doctrine of our Lord as conflicting with the law of Moses, they at once rejected it.

It may be said that our Lord did, on other occasions, clothe His ideas in images almost, if not quite, as offensive to his hearers. For example, he represents the necessity of patient suffering under the harsh image of carrying the cross. But this case is not in point for two reasons: 1. The death of the cross, though disgraceful, was often inflicted upon the innocent; while eating flesh and drinking blood was wicked in itself; and to select such an example to inculcate a doctrine, was very different from referring to an example simply disgraceful. 2. The doctrine of mortification is necessarily harsh in itself, requiring a harsh figure to represent it truly. The figure selected by our Lord was fit and appropriate, and had the advantage of His own example. But the figure of eating flesh and drinking blood to illustrate a pleasing doctrine has no parallel anywhere in Scripture.

How did the hearers of Our Lord understand Him?

The preceding remarks relate to the sense in which the hearers of our Lord must have understood Him, according to the then existing usage. It is now proper

to inquire in what sense they did, in fact, understand Him.

The construction put upon the language of a speaker by those who hear him is at least *prima facie* evidence of his true meaning. This presumption becomes almost conclusive, when the speaker is aware of the construction placed upon his language, and does not object to it; and it becomes entirely conclusive, when the speaker by his acts or words, confirms the interpretation of his hearers.

It is true, that in regard to a point of no importance, a speaker may well let his audience remain in error, as that error would, in no material respect, influence their determination. But if the error be material, it is the clear duty of the speaker to explain except in special cases, as where a future event will give the hearers the true interpretation. In the case under consideration, the error was most material.

That the hearers of Christ understood Him in the literal sense, is scarcely denied by any writer. When our Lord said, "And the bread that I will give is my flesh," the Jews "strove among themselves saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" That they understood Him in the literal sense is apparent from these considerations:

"First. That the Jews considered the expression just used as totally different from those in the first portion of the discourse. For if they had understood by eating His flesh, the same as having him, the bread of life — this having been already explained by himself of believing on him — they could not ask in what manner this manducation was to take place.

"Secondly. We must conclude that the Jews understood the transition to be the doctrine, literally expressed, of feeding upon Christ; for their objection sup-

poses Him to be teaching a doctrine impossible to be practiced; 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' Now no other but the literal signification could possibly give rise to this objection." (Wiseman's Lec., 102.)

Thirdly. If nothing new was asserted by Christ, (as they understood him,) then there could have been no apparent cause for the increased excitement. Nothing but understanding our Lord in the literal sense can be consistent with the intense excitement that followed our Lord's declaration.

Did they understand Him correctly?

To arrive at a true answer to this question, in addition to that which has already been advanced, we must inquire whether Christ, by word or act, confirmed the interpretation put upon His words by those who heard Him. To understand the meaning of His conduct on this occasion, we must examine it on other occasions, and ascertain what was His usual mode of action under similar circumstances.

1. When He used words in a figurative sense, and His hearers understood Him literally, and made objections, what was His usual course?

When Christ said to Nicodemus, that "unless a man be born again he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God," he understood Him literally, and our Lord at once corrected the error. So, when He said to His disciples, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees," they understood Him literally, and He at once explained His true meaning. So, when He said, "I have food to eat that ye know not of," and they misunderstood Him, He corrected the error. So, when He said, "Lazarus our friend sleepeth," they understood Him in the literal sense, and He at once explained.

In this case the explanation was not so important, as no doctrine was propounded. So, when He said, "Whither I go you cannot come," the Jews understood Him in a gross material sense, and asked, "Will he kill himself?" Our Lord at once removed this absurd construction by saying, "You are from beneath, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world." (John viii, 21.) When He said, "It is easier for a camel," etc., His disciples understood Him that a rich man could not be saved, and he at once corrected their mistake. (Matt. xix, 24.) When He spoke to the Jews of spiritual slavery, they understood Him literally, and He at once corrected their misconstruction. (John viii, 32.) When our Lord told the Jews that if they were the children of Abraham they would do the works of Abraham, and they understood Him to mean literally that they were not Abraham's descendants, He explains by saying, "You are of your father, the devil, and the desires of your father ye will do;" showing that He meant their spiritual, not natural descent. (Id. 39.) And when His disciples said one to another, "What is this that He saith, a little while? We know not what he speaketh;" our Lord, in succeeding verses, explains His meaning until He was properly understood. (John xvi, 17, 18.)

From these examples it appears that our Lord acted upon the just and generous rule which requires every speaker to explain his meaning when misunderstood; and that He was so much in this habit, that He not only explained to His disciples, but even to His most perverse and obstinate enemies.

2. When, on the contrary, He used words in their literal sense, and his hearers understood Him correctly, and made objections, what was then His usual course?

The following examples will form an answer to this question:

When our Lord said to the sick of the palsy, "Son, be of good heart, thy sins are forgiven thee," His hearers understood him correctly, and made objections, and our Saviour stood to His words. (Matt. ix, 2.) So, when He said to the Jews "Abraham your father rejoiced that he might see my day: he saw it, and was glad." Those who heard Him understood Him literally as saying that He was coeval with Abraham, and our Lord at once stood to his position, notwithstanding that He foresaw that personal violence would be the result of His course. (John viii, 56.) This eighth chapter affords us marked examples of our Lord's method of acting in both cases.

In the very chapter under consideration we have an instance. Christ having asserted that He came down from Heaven, and His hearers understanding Him literally, and making objections, He stands to His position, and repeats the same assertion in other parts of the chapter. (50, 51, 59.)

From these numerous examples we are forced to adopt these two rules: 1. When His hearers misunderstood Him, and objected, He explained His true meaning. 2. When they understood Him correctly and objected, He repeated His proposition.

And this course was in perfect accordance with reason, justice, and truth. Where a speaker uses words susceptible of different meanings, and he is aware, as our Lord was, of the construction placed upon his words, and he then repeats them without explanation, he adopts, expressly, the construction of his hearers, and makes it his own by his own most explicit act, and the construction becomes conclusive. We can imagine a case where

a human speaker, under the influence of fear, or some other extraordinary motive, might thus act, and not be concluded by his conduct; but we are at a loss to imagine a case where a Divine Lawgiver could thus act, without fixing the meaning put upon his words, by those who heard him.

After our Lord had explicitly stated that the bread he would give was His flesh, and the Jews had asked the question, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" our Lord makes no explanation, but repeats the proposition in terms still more emphatic, reaffirming the truth of the proposition he had just before advanced. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

The case under consideration then falls plainly under the latter rule. His words being correctly understood, in their literal sense, and His proposition itself being disputed, our Saviour makes no explanation, but stands to his words, and repeats them in six different forms, still more emphatic than before.

Exceptions to the rules deduced from our Lord's conduct.

Let us now examine certain alleged exceptions to the two rules we have deduced from our Lord's conduct. If we find exceptions to either rule, let us carefully examine and see how far, and how far only, such exception will limit the application of the rule. In other words, let us see whether the exceptions, if any such exist, establish or destroy the rule, or simply limit it.

There are only two cases found in the history of our Lord's conduct, relied upon as conflicting with these rules.

The first case is that found in the fourth chapter of St. John, in our Lord's conference with the Samaritan woman. This case is only an apparent exception to the first rule. I say apparent only, for, as I take it, the woman not only should have understood Him correctly, but did so understand Him; and that the whole circumstances and language, taken and considered together, very clearly show it; and that so far from constituting an exception to the first rule, it is a case in support of it.

Our Saviour in the tenth verse, in answer to her question as to why He, being a Jew, would ask of her to drink, replies: "If thou didst know the gift of God, and who is he that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou perhaps wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." She evidently understood Him in a literal sense, and shows this by her answer. The language of Christ was simply "living water;" a phrase that might well be taken literally. Our Saviour, in the 13th and 14th verses, gives her an explanatory answer, defining the qualities of the water He would give, and concluded by saying, "But the water that I will give him, shall become in him a fountain of water, springing up into life everlasting."

This language is plainly metaphorical, and is so plainly so, that no one reader, to my knowledge, ever understood it otherwise. But the Samaritan woman still understood him, literally, for the reason, that at this part of our Saviour's discourse, she did not yet know who it was that spoke to her. A knowledge of His character would at once give her the key to the true meaning.

Christ knew that she had correct conceptions of the character of His mission. She tells him, in the 25th verse, that she knew that the Messiah cometh, and when he is come "he will" (not create a world, or wells, or streams of water, but) "tell us all things;" or, in other words, teach us all truth. Our Saviour, therefore, instead of giving her any further verbal explanations, breaks off abruptly, and says, "Go call thy husband, and come hither." This was evidently done to give Him the opportunity to show her that He possessed divine power; and in the end, to tell her plainly, He was the Christ. The effect of this information upon her mind is shown by the 28th and 29th verses. She left her water-pot, (a circumstance showing her haste and her excitement,) and went into the City and said unto the men there, "Come, and see a man who has told me all things whatsoever I have done. Is not he the Christ?" This, taken in connection with the language of the men to her in the 42nd verse, shows plainly that she believed He was the Christ, and that she understood Him.

But our Saviour had other objects in view, as well as the instruction of a single person; and those objects were of paramount importance. "Upon perusing this interesting chapter," says Dr. Wiseman, "it has often struck me as one of the most beautiful instances on record of His (our Saviour's) amiable ingenuity in doing good. He desired to make an opening for his religion among the Samaritans. But had He presented Himself among them uncalled, had He commenced His preaching of His own accord, he could have only expected to be rejected, to be ill-treated as a Jew, and punished as a religious innovator. He wishes, therefore, to be invited by the Samaritans themselves, and he selects the most favorable moment and means for effect-

ing his purpose. He dismisses all His disciples to the city of Sichem, and seats Himself at the well, where he was sure to find some of the inhabitants, and where the rules of hospitality in the East would give him a right to enter into conversation. A female accordingly comes, and he uses this right by asking her for water."

The conversation which follows was all adapted to excite her curiosity; and the replies of our Lord, and the ingenious manner in which He introduced the subjects, all go to show the great leading object he had in view. After leading her from one topic to another, and exciting her curiosity to its highest pitch, and after showing that He knew her most intimate domestic relations, (a matter best calculated to excite the attention of a woman in her condition,) He tells her plainly, that He is the Christ. The woman at once goes into the city, as Jesus designed, and tells the men of the wonderful person she had met, and invites them, in the most exciting and urgent manner, to come and see Him, giving them the most extraordinary reasons for the request she made. Our Saviour accordingly did not go into the City, until they came to Him and invited Him in, and desired Him to tarry with them. After He was invited He remained with them two days, making many proselytes.

An examination of the whole narrative, and a consideration of the relation the Samaritans bore to the Jews and their religion, must convince any one that the principal object Christ had in view, in His conference with this woman, was, at first, more to excite than to gratify curiosity. For this reason, (although He gives her an explanation of His meaning in verses 13 and 14, sufficiently clear to her when she was afterwards informed of His true character,) He so manages His discourse as to accomplish the great end had in view by

him. If she had not finally understood Him to speak of spiritual waters, instead of natural, she would naturally have said, after "who has told me all things whatsoever I have done," and has promised to give us a fountain of water, more excellent than the well of Jacob.

But putting the most extreme construction upon this incident, and thence concluding that the Samaritan woman never did understand our Saviour otherwise than in the literal sense, still the case is most clearly distinguishable from the one under consideration, in these most important particulars:

1. He was not speaking of a doctrine that must be believed upon pain of eternal death.

2. The woman still believed in Him, and was not lost for want of an explanation.

3. She was not His disciple, who already believed on Him, and was still permitted to go away forever, simply for want of an explanation of one hard saying.

4. Christ did not tell her, when she simply misunderstood, that she did not believe.

The second case relied upon is found in the second chapter of St. John's Gospel.

When our Lord had driven out the money changers from the temple, and the Jews had asked for a sign of His authority, He answered:

"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said: Six and forty years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days? But He spake of the temple of His body. When, therefore, He was risen again from the dead, his disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed the Scriptures and the word that Jesus had said."

Our Lord, in this case, had used language susceptible of two meanings, and the Jews took the word temple in the wrong sense, and He suffered them to remain in their erroneous construction, without any explanation.

That the Jews put the most natural construction upon His words, would appear from these reflections. He had driven out the money changers from the temple, and told them not to make the house of His Father a house of traffic. So far He spoke of the temple. The Jews asked for a sign of His authority for driving out those men from the temple, and our Lord, without explanation, answered: "Destroy this temple," etc. The only temple that had been spoken of was the Jewish temple, and the Jews inquired for His authority in what He did in that temple, and our Lord said, in reply, *this* temple. Suppose we strike out verses 21 and 22, which contain the special explanation, (the advantages of which the Jews had not at that time,) and exclude from our consideration the resurrection of Christ—in other words, place ourselves precisely in the same position of the Jews, and what construction would we place upon the language of our Lord? Surely, the construction they did.

That this case constitutes an exception to the first rule, must be conceded. Our Lord, though misunderstood, gave no explanation. It is true, He did not repeat His statement, thereby making their construction His own, but simply left them without explanation. This is not, therefore, an exception to the second rule.

In this case our Lord was only making a prediction, and not putting forth a doctrine, which He required then to be believed; and this distinction is most material. The only object our Lord had in making this prediction was to constitute it, when fulfilled, evidence

of His Divinity. This is shown by verse 22. To accomplish all he intended, He had simply to make the prediction. The act of making it did not constitute any proof, but it was both the making and fulfilment, taken together, that did. His words showed two things; 1. That a miraculous event was foretold. 2. That it could be known when it happened.

Now was there any necessity for any explanation? Christ could not be expected to do an idle thing. Suppose He had explained His true meaning; would have that removed the unbelief of the Jews? It was just as great a miracle to raise His own body from the grave, as to raise the temple. The event fulfilling the prophecy would make all clear. Our Lord did not wish to interfere with the personal free agency of the Jews, and it was not His purpose to make His prophecy plain. The event, predicted, in fact, constituted a part of the prediction itself, for the purpose of explanation. It is so in reference to prophecies generally. They are purposely left obscure, for the best of reasons, until their fulfilment makes them clear.

This being a conceded exception to the first rule, how far does it affect that rule? Does it not establish and sustain it, rather than destroy it? It being a special exception, for special reasons, and the fact of its being an exception being expressly marked, does, indeed, strengthen the rule; and why? Because the same apostle who records the words and conduct of our Lord in this special case, also records His words and conduct in the sixth chapter; and in reference to this special case, he puts in himself an express explanation of our Lord's meaning, and does not do so in the other. Why does he do this in one case, and not in the other? The reason is palpable. Our Lord was misunderstood in

the one case, and as it was not proper for Him then to give the explanation, St. John gives it afterwards. But as to eating His flesh, He was correctly understood; and therefore St. John purposely fails to give any explanation. When a writer takes pains to point out certain exceptions expressly, he, by this very act, negatives all idea of other exceptions, not so stated. So it is with respect to a statute. If the lawmaker himself assumes to state exceptions to his own general rule, he must be presumed to intend to finish his work, and not leave it unfinished, like a man who attempts to build a house, and fails. St. John was in the habit of making these explanations in cases of obscurity; and, had our Lord failed to make an explanation when misunderstood as to eating His flesh, the apostle would no doubt have given it. Two explanations occur in this very chapter, verses 6 and 71. Also one in the last chapter. We are nowhere told that the Jews misunderstood Christ. No subsequent event explains His meaning. On the contrary, as we shall see, subsequent events confirm the construction of the Jews.

Did Our Lord confirm the construction put upon His words by the Jews?

I have endeavored to show that the case under consideration comes under the second rule; namely, that our Lord was correctly understood, and His proposition itself being disputed, He repeated it again with increased emphasis. Is there a single instance to be found, where His hearers misunderstood Him, and, in reply to them, He repeated His words without explanation? Can any such a case be shown, either in the conduct of Christ or in that of any other just speaker?

The Jews had made the objection that Christ could

not literally give them His flesh to eat; and in REPLY TO THIS OBJECTION, "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," etc. All that Christ said in verses 53 to 58 inclusive, was said in the form of a reply to the objection of the Jews. The language of the reply of our Lord is most emphatic. If, therefore, the Jews simply misunderstood Him, what possible purpose could He have had in making such a reply? Or was his reply without a purpose, and simply idle? Was it meaningless? Can we impute such a weakness to Christ, the Son of God? We dare not do that. Then what could He mean by this most emphatic reassertion of His proposition itself, when that proposition had not been, in fact, disputed by the Jews, in making their objection? A proposition cannot be believed, unless it is first understood; nor can it be disbelieved, unless first understood. We can believe or disbelieve a proposition without *comprehending* it, but we can do neither, without understanding the proposition. If the Jews simply misunderstood Christ, their objection was not aimed at the real proposition itself, but at an imaginary proposition, never made. Therefore, for our Lord to repeat to them the same proposition, in substantially the same language, and without explanation, would have been about as idle and senseless an act as can well be imagined. What possible end could the repetition, without explanation, of a misunderstood proposition, accomplish? Would such a repetition secure the reception of the real proposition? On the contrary, would not the repetition, without explanation, of a misunderstood proposition, but defeat the very purpose the speaker had in view, by expressly confirming His hearers in their mistake? When Christ

put forth His proposition, did He wish to be understood? and did He wish His proposition to be believed? If He did not, for what purpose did He put it forth? He was not simply making a prediction. He was propounding a doctrine. Did He propound this doctrine without a purpose? If He propounded a doctrine, it must have been true; and if true, He must have intended it to be believed; and if so, He must have intended *then* to be understood.

If we say the metaphorical sense is the true one, then we make our Lord's conduct, on this occasion, the strangest anomaly, at war with His own uniform practice upon all similar occasions, and that of every sincere speaker. And we do this without any authority or example to sustain us. In all my reading, observation, and experience, I have never met with an instance where a speaker, having put forth a proposition which He wished to be understood, and, where his proposition was misunderstood by his hearers, simply repeated it in language still more emphatic, but without explanation.

For the reasons given, this conclusion seems to follow, that the acts and language, of our Lord are wholly irreconcilable with the metaphorical sense, and cannot be explained, except upon the hypothesis that the Jews did understand Him correctly in the literal sense.

Did His disciples understand Him in the literal sense?

The verses from 59 to 65 inclusive, are taken up mainly in relating what the murmuring disciples said, and in our Lord's reply to them. The words, "these things," in verse 59, refer to the entire discourse; while the words "this" and "it," in verses 60 and 61, refer to only one thing; namely, that hard saying. What was that hard saying? It could be nothing but the statement of our

Lord that He would give them His flesh to eat. In other words the disciples murmured at the same thing that caused the Jews to strive among themselves and ask: "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"

The audience of Christ, on this occasion, consisted of the admiring multitude who had followed Him into the wilderness, among whom He had many disciples, "who believed on His name." (John ii, 23; iii, 22.) There were no proud Pharisees or cunning Sadducees there. They (the multitude) accounted Him as a prophet. (14.) We are told that "the people took shipping and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus." (24.) From verse 25 to 35 inclusive, the historian uses the pronoun "they" to designate the persons who had asked Christ the questions, and to whom He gave the answers recorded. The inquiries made were such, up to this point, that the whole multitude could join in asking, as the questions themselves were not improper. But in verses 41 and 42, we are told that the Jews murmured, and asked the question, "How then saith He I came down from heaven?" Now it is clear, that the disciples who "believed on His name," did not join with the Jews in denying that Jesus came down from heaven. They believed that proposition, and did not murmur at it, as did the Jews. The first and only thing they murmured at was that "hard saying," which caused the Jews to strive among themselves. The word strive is a very expressive term, and shows a more intense degree of excitement than is expressed by the word murmur. When our Lord said He came down from heaven, the Jews murmured, while the disciples believed. But when He put forth another proposition, more difficult for them to believe, the Jews, "strove among themselves," and the disciples murmured. It is clear that the term "Jews" is used by the historian

to distinguish those who did not, from those who did, believe on Christ.

If, then, it be true, that Christ only continued to teach the same doctrine He had taught in the first part of His discourse, and which His disciples believed, and they still understood Him correctly in the metaphorical sense, how could they have murmured at it, and called it a hard saying? Would they now murmur at what they had before believed? If so, why? Such a course as these murmuring disciples pursued is utterly inconsistent with any other hypothesis than the one, that, like the Jews, they understood Christ in the literal sense. The whole narrative is full and clear to this point. The historian states that the murmuring disciples heard this hard saying, and asked, "Who can hear it?" St. John unquestionably refers to the saying that gave so much offence to the Jews; and, as he speaks of these murmuring disciples asking a question substantially the same with that asked by the Jews, he must mean that they (the murmuring disciples) understood our Lord in the same literal sense.

It being a proven position, that these murmuring disciples understood our Lord in the literal sense, the question arises, did they understand Him correctly?

Let us, then, examine the language of our Lord, used by Him in His reply to these murmuring disciples: "He said unto them, Doth this offend you?" Is not this unaccountable language in the mouth of a Speaker, whose hearers have simply misunderstood, but have not, in fact, disputed His real proposition? Did Christ mean to ask, "Does the imaginary proposition, which I did not make, offend you?" That they were offended is certain; and if they simply misunderstood our Lord's language, then they were only offended at an imaginary

proposition. They had simply misunderstood Him, and there was, therefore, in their minds, no real cause of offence.

But such a question could alone be predicated upon the fact, that the cause of offence was a real subsisting, and not a mere imaginary, doctrine. And the efforts of Christ are, therefore, not directed to an explanation of His meaning, but to a proof of the truth of His proposition.

In further sustaining His proposition, in His reply to these murmuring disciples, who had heard His answers to the Jews, our Lord adapted His arguments to the state of their minds and predicated them upon the state of their previous belief. They had believed and readily embraced His doctrine — they had not disputed the fact that He came down from heaven, and that He was there before; but like those disciples represented by the good seed falling into stony ground, (Matt. xiii, 20, 21.) they now met a real, not an imaginary difficulty. Christ, therefore, said to them, "What and if ye shall see the son of man ascend up where he was before. It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. Therefore said I unto you that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

The meaning of Christ in these extracts would seem to be clear, and perfectly consistent with the literal sense, and wholly irreconcilable with the metaphorical. The substance was this:

"You consider it impossible that I should give you my flesh to eat; you question my power; you did believe that I came down from heaven; if you see me ascend up where I was before, will that be more difficult than for

me to have come down? and are not both as difficult as for me to give you my flesh to eat? The proposition is hard to the natural man; it is the spirit that quickeneth the mind to believe—the flesh profiteth nothing to this result: you must not rely upon yourselves alone, but upon God, for I have told you already that no man can come to me unless it be given him of my Father, and this you did not dispute: my words are spirit and life, but there are some of you that believe not the proposition I have propounded.”

We may give the words of our Lord, in reply to the objection of these murmuring disciples, any construction we please; and still, one thing is clear; they were solely directed to sustain an understood and disputed proposition. If not, why did our Lord say. “My words are spirit and life,” when they had simply been misunderstood? To say that words are true, when their true meaning has not been disputed, would be idle. Besides this, our Lord makes a statement of a matter of simple fact that could not possibly be true, unless these murmuring disciples did understand Him correctly. He tells them, “But there are some of you that believe not.” They had said, “This is a hard saying, who can bear it?” which means, who can believe it? (John viii, 43; ix, 27.) And Christ tells them that they do not believe. They could not disbelieve a proposition they never understood. The only thing they had disputed was this hard saying, that He would give them His flesh to eat; and it was in reference to this proposition, and to this only, that our Lord told them they “believed not.”

If then, these murmuring disciples simply misunderstood our Lord’s meaning how could He tell them, “you

believe not?" If the Protestant view be right, these disciples refused to believe a proposition never advanced, and one that was not true. How can you class men, who simply misunderstood a proposition, with unbelievers of the proposition itself? What sort of logic or truth is there in saying to a man, who simply misunderstands you, and has a mere imaginary proposition in his mind, "Sir, you believe not?" Christ certainly intended to let these disciples know that their error consisted in not believing. This could not be true, if they simply misunderstood. There could be no wrong in disbelieving a supposed untrue proposition. And Christ not only tells these disciples that they did not believe; but the apostle himself classes them among genuine unbelievers. (64.)

But it may be said, that at the precise time when these murmuring disciples said, "who can bear it," they did misunderstand our Lord; but that His subsequent words, found in verses 62 and 63, so explained His meaning as that they did correctly understand Him at the time He said, "you believe not." This would be assuming facts outside the record, not only without the slightest evidence, but contrary to the simple narrative of the facts as stated in it. We are informed that Jesus knew in Himself that the disciples murmured, (61.) but there is not the slightest intimation anywhere, either by St. John, who puts in several explanations of his own in this same chapter, or by the words or acts of Christ, that He was misunderstood by any one. On the contrary, we are expressly informed that these disciples did dispute one proposition, and we are not informed that they did dispute any other; and, therefore Christ could only refer to that one — that hard saying as they at first understood it.

How did the apostles understand our Lord?

Let us now ascertain how the twelve understood our Lord.

We are told that many of His disciples left Him, and walked no more with Him. It was then that our Lord put this mournful and solemn question to the twelve: "Will ye also go away?" And then the intrepid and ardent soul of Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

It is apparent that Christ's question to the twelve was predicated upon the same state of facts as His question to the murmuring disciples, "Doth this offend you?" and upon the ground that the twelve had the same inducements to disbelieve, as these murmuring disciples who had left Him. If the twelve understood Him in a different sense from the Jews and disbelieving disciples, there could be no reason for asking such a question. The fervent and confiding answer of Peter shows conclusively that the twelve also understood their Lord as the others had understood Him; that is, literally. The minds of the twelve had to overcome the same difficulty that had wrecked the faith of the many who abandoned their Lord. The reason given by Peter was the most simple, logical and rational. We are sure you are that Christ, and have the words of eternal life. This was enough, and they were compelled to believe anything that Christ propounded, whether they comprehended it or not.

The twelve then understood Him in a literal sense, and believed that which the others disbelieved. And if

they at that time believed the doctrine that Christ would literally give them His flesh to eat, when and where did they ever change their opinion, and where is that important fact recorded? We find a part of the disciples at one time disbelieving a certain doctrine, and the chosen twelve believing the same thing at the same time; and if we can find no evidence of any change in the minds of the twelve, what right have we to say, either that there was such a change, or that they did not correctly understand the meaning of our Lord's words? At a given time we find, in the minds of the apostles, a certain construction of our Lord's words; we find this construction was not objected to by Him, but was confirmed by word and act, that could not be reconciled with any other construction; and we find afterwards not the slightest evidence to correct such an error, if error it was, and upon what ground can we assume that these apostles were then mistaken? It is true, there are several cases where it is stated that the chosen apostles misunderstood our Lord's meaning at the time His words were spoken; but in these cases we are expressly informed of the fact, and of the further fact, that they afterwards understood Him correctly, and we are also informed what Christ did in fact mean. Now, in these instances, our doubts are wholly removed by explicit explanations; and yet, in this important case, where a great doctrine was taught, upon which hung eternal life and death, and where the misconstruction of our Lord's words was in reference to a most vitally essential matter, and gave them a meaning precisely opposite to the one intended; and yet we have no explanation — not one of those so often put in by St. John, to make the meaning clear.

The words of institution.

As the Catholic understands it, the Blessed Eucharist was promised in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel, leaving the mere manner in which it was to be given, to be explained by the institution of the Sacrament.

The history of this institution is given in the first three Gospels, and in the epistles of St. Paul. The narrations are substantially the same, though differing in some slight particulars. In all, the words are given: "This is my body. This is my blood." St. John, in his Gospel, says nothing about the institution of the Sacrament.

Our Lord says: "This is my body;" and the Catholic responds: "Lord, I believe it to be thy body;" while the Protestant replies: "Lord, I believe it to be a figure of thy body." Who replies, yea, yea, to our Lord's assertion? Is it the Catholic or Protestant?

The Catholic maintains that the verb "to be," in the passage, is to be taken in its ordinary literal sense, and the Protestant contends that it ought to be taken in a figurative sense, equivalent to the word represent.

In the Old and New Testament this verb is used many thousands of times in its literal sense. These examples are too numerous to require any specifications. The literal sense of the term is then the general rule. Those who oppose the literal and simple construction are compelled to show two things:

1. That there are exceptions to the general rule.
2. That the verb "to be," in this case, comes properly within the exception.

The first thing the Protestant must show, is, that there are exceptions. To do this they bring forward a number of passages which may be classed as follows:

I. Genesis xli, 26, 27: "The seven good kine are seven years." Dan. vii, 24: "The ten horns are ten kings." Matt. xiii, 38, 39: "The field is the world," etc. I Cor. x, 4: "And that rock was Christ." Rev. i, 20: "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches." Gal. iv, 24: "These are the two covenants." John x, 7: "I am the door."

2. John xv, 1: "I am the true vine."

Some of these cases clearly establish the first point, That there are exceptions to the general rule. The next and most important point to prove, is, that the words "This is my body," come within the exceptions. To do this the same passages are relied upon.

In considering these texts, let us see how they are marked so as to be known as exceptions. There must be some mark or distinction to point out exceptions; otherwise, we could not know them to be such. The usages, habits, and practice of the writer, considered in connection with the usages of language will enable us to determine the exceptions. If we find that in relation to a certain class or classes of cases, the verb "to be" is used in a metaphorical sense, when it is generally used in its literal sense, then all cases that come within such class or classes, constitute exceptions. But the existence of such exceptions, thus marked and distinguished, is no evidence that other exceptions exist, which are not thus marked and distinguished. So far from it, the existence of such exceptions, thus marked and distinguished, is a clear proof that other cases, not thus designated, are not exceptions, but are intentionally left to be governed by the general rule.

It is perfectly clear that exceptions do exist — that they are so marked as to be distinguished from the general rule — and that we must distinguish between them. Be-

fore the words of institution can be considered as an exception, it must be shown that they belong to one or the other of the classes stated. In other words, it must be shown that these passages are parallel to the words of institution, otherwise they prove nothing.

The first class of alleged exceptions considered.

How do we know that the passages in the first class stated do constitute exceptions?

In the first two cases we are expressly told that Joseph and Daniel were interpreting dreams, and in the third, that our Lord was interpreting a parable. In the fourth case, St. Paul first says: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock;" and then tells us, "And that Rock was Christ." The apostle, for the purpose of explanation, first transforms the real rock of Horeb into a spiritual or fictitious rock, and then says that spiritual rock was Christ. The language of St. Paul, taken in connection with the historical relation of the Israelites, drinking the water flowing from the rock of Horeb, leaves his meaning so clear, that no one has ever misunderstood him. The case from the Apocalypse is equally clear. "Write the things which thou hast seen. . . . The mystery of the seven stars. . . . The seven stars are the seven angels." Here the apostle John was explaining a mystery. So, in the case from Galatians, St. Paul is careful to inform us that he is explaining an allegory. "Which things are an allegory, for these are the two covenants." In reference to the last case, "I am the door," our Lord was interpreting a parable. We are first informed that Christ opened the eyes of a man blind from his birth—that Jesus had found the man after the Jews had cast him out, and some of the

Pharisees being present, and making objections, our Lord commences the discourse in which these words occur. (John ix, 1-41.) In the tenth chapter he continues the same discourse, and in the first five verses gives in part the parable of the sheep fold. In verses 6 and 7 we are told, "This parable spoke Jesus unto them, but they understood not what things they were which He spoke unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep." Our Lord goes on in succeeding verses, still speaking of the same thing, and in verse 26 He tells the Jews that they "believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."

In all these cases we are clearly told that these passages are explanations of symbolical instruction. Some are dreams, some parables, some allegories, and some mysteries. They all have the same character, and belong to the same class.

And the reason of this is plain. In symbolical instruction, the symbolical characters are fictitious, and the characters represented are real. Hence, when we are first told that the symbolical characters are fictitious, and the represented characters are real, the usages of language allow the use of the verb "to be" between two nominatives, (one fictitious and the other real,) in a figurative sense. There is no more chance for mistake in the explanation of a dream, parable, or allegory, because the form of the expression is in the positive, than there is in the relation of the same, when the language used is in the same positive form. We are first told that it is symbolical in all the cases, and this constitutes a key to the meaning. When we are once so informed, the statement proceeds as if the facts are real. "Behold a sower went forth to sow."

Now these cases constitute a class of exceptions, for the simple reason, that they were all cases of symbolical instruction, in which the characters representing others were expressly stated to be fictitious, not real. How can such cases apply to the words, "This is my body?" Are we informed that there had been any dream here? any parable? any allegory? any mystery? or any explanation of any such things? Not at all.

We find the exceptions of the first class so plainly marked and distinguished, that no one ever yet had any difficulty in understanding them as such. But in reference to the words of institution, we find no such distinction. And is this want of such a character any reason why we should put them into the same class with parables, dreams, allegories and mysteries? The very fact that they are different requires us to put them in different classes. If the writer intended that the words in this case should be taken metaphorically, why did He not follow His usual course, and mark them as exceptions? Having marked all the cases that we know to be exceptions, why are we not given here the same marks to aid us, as in the other cases? For the reason, that the words of institution constitute no exception, and are purposely left to come under the general rule of literal interpretation.

The second class of alleged exceptions considered.

* The case given under this class is simply one of comparison and constitutes no exception to the general rule.

The words, "I am the vine," occur in a long discourse of our Lord with the eleven. Our Lord instituted a comparison between Himself and the vine. His meaning is, "I am as the vine, ye are as the branches." This is clearly shown in verses 4 and 6.

In comparing two known and similar things together, it is very common to omit explanatory terms, such as resembles, like, as, similar. The reason is, because the known resemblance of the two things compared together, renders the use of these terms unnecessary. The tendency of all usage is toward brevity. Every composition is full of elliptical sentences.

The words of institution cannot be put into the second class for the reason that no comparison was intended by Christ between bread and His body. No one, so far as I am advised, has ever contended that any comparison was meant.

We have now finished the consideration of some of those alleged cases of exception to the general rule; and we have seen that the only cases wherein the verb "to be" is used in the figurative sense, are those cases where an explanation of symbolical instruction is given. I have endeavored to show that none of these passages has any application to the words of institution. They are not cases in point—they are plainly marked and distinguished (in most of the cases in express words, and in all by the clear context) as special cases not coming under the general rule, but as clear exceptions to it—and that the words of institution cannot be brought into this class of exceptions, for the reason there was no dream—no parable—no allegory—and no explanation of any such thing in these words, nor in the circumstances attending their utterance. They were used in making our Lord's last Testament—in the solemn institution of the Sacrament—and at a time, and in reference to a subject where the use of words in a new and unheard of symbolical sense would have been certainly as much out of place as we can possibly imagine.

And I must think that if the question of construction

regarded the language of a human lawgiver or writer, and such examples, taken from the mere interpretation of dreams, parables, and allegories, were brought forward by any party for the purpose of interpreting language used in its plain form, and not in application to dreams, parables, and allegories, that such party would be considered as governed by some strange and most singular delusion. In reference to the interpretation of Scripture, I must think that such a resort arises from the extreme destitution of materials in the shape of parallel passages. Nothing but the dry distress of writers could induce them to bring forward such examples.

With all due deference, I submit to the candor of my readers, whether these cases of exception, being thus so clearly marked and designated, as such, do not the more clearly show the literal sense of the words of institution. He who seeks to show an exception to the general rule of the plain ordinary literal sense, ought to make his case clear, by showing that the passage is strictly within a particular class of exceptions. The very fact that all conceded exceptions range themselves under one class — namely, the explanation of symbolical instruction, and that they are thus clearly marked as such does strengthen the general rule, by showing that no other exceptions are intended. Is there, in the Bible, one solitary case, where, in the solemn institution of a Sacrament, or in making of a last testament, language is used in a new and unexplained symbolical sense?

Giving the name of the thing represented to the figure.

This is one of the most popular objections against the literal sense of the words, "This is my body." It is relied upon by Protestant writers generally. The examples cited are, a picture, a map, or bust. If we point

to a portrait or bust, and say "this is" such a person, naming him, or if we point to a map, and say "this is Europe," we are at once understood.

Portraits, busts, and maps are representations by resemblances. They are but images of the things they represent. Symbol is the very essence of their existence. They can only exist as symbols. This fact is known to all. Common usage is always founded upon common sense, and this never requires the doing of an idle thing. Therefore, when we point to a picture, we are not required to inform the person whom we address, that it is a picture. His own senses assure him of that fact. But as he does not know the person or thing represented, we must inform him of this fact.

The case under consideration is wholly different. According to the Protestant view, Christ was for the first time constituting bread the symbol of His body. There being not the slightest natural resemblance between the figure and the object, and bread having an independent existence as a real object in itself, and not as a figure, it was just as necessary to inform us of the fact that it was then made a figure, as to inform us of the thing it represented. When an arbitrary figure is first constituted such, no one can know that it is a figure at all, unless so informed.

If a speaker should use a known term in a new figurative sense for the first time, he should give us a definition of this new sense. Thus, when our Lord instituted the Sacrament of the Last Supper, and, for the first time, made it commemorated, He was careful to inform us of that fact. "Do this in remembrance of me." If, then, the bread was used for the first time on that occasion to be a figure of the body of Christ, why did He not so inform us? Why inform us in one case, and not in

the other? Is not the fact that upon that occasion He did so inform us in one case, and not in the other, a very strong proof that the two cases are not alike?

This objection is founded upon the same basis as that drawn from symbolical instruction. It is but an attempt to apply the language used in the explanation of pictures, to the interpretation of positive forms of expression, not relating to any such thing. The symbolical characters in mysteries, parables, allegories, and dreams are all stated to be fictitious, and a picture is known to be but an image because it can be nothing else; and when we come to point out the thing represented, which has a real, or assumed real, existence, usage allows us to use the verb "to be" in a figurative sense because we are speaking of things first admitted to be figurative. But in reference to the bread, we are not told that it was figurative—there was no resemblance, such as a picture has to the thing represented—how, then, could we know it was a figure?

The words of St. Paul.

St. Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, speaks in two places of the Eucharist. As the two translations differ in one material point, I shall give both.

I Cor. x., 16.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (King Jas. Trans.)

"The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord." (Douay Trans.)

I Cor. xi., 27, 29.

"Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the

"Therefore, whoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and

Lord. . . . For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."	blood of the Lord. . . . For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."
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"The communion of the body of Christ." The word "communion" is here used in the sense of partaking, as shown by the two succeeding verses. There is then a real partaking here, and not a figurative eating. In the sixth of John the words "eat the flesh of the Son of Man," the Protestant says, mean a figurative eating, and in this extract they mean an actual partaking of the bread, and not of the body. In the sixth of John the real flesh was meant, but not the real eating. Here the real eating is meant but not the real body. The Catholic understands that it was a real eating, and a real flesh and body, in both cases; and certainly this construction is the most simple, natural, and consistent.

If the words "body and blood" are used in the first extract from St. Paul in their literal sense, the Catholic is right. So, if the sixth of John refers to the Eucharist, the word "flesh" being used in its literal sense in verse 52, the equivalent word "body" in the extract from St. Paul, should be used in the same literal sense. For if the Scripture in these different places refers to the same thing, the words should be taken in their literal sense in both places.

Our Lord having instituted the Eucharist before St. Paul wrote, there is nothing inconsistent with the Catholic view, in the language of the apostle, as to "eating the bread and drinking the cup"; because the practice of still calling a thing after its change, by its former name, is very common in Scripture. This would be particularly so, when the appearances were still the same.

When the sense is once settled, the term will afterwards be used in that sense. Joseph was repeatedly called the father of our Lord. (Luke ii, 41, 48.) And yet no one was misled by this, because we are informed in preceding places that Joseph was only His foster father. So, when the water was changed into wine, it was still called water after the change. So, when the eyes of the blind man had been opened, he was afterwards still called the "blind man." (John ix, 17.) So, when Aaron's rod had been changed into a serpent, it was still called a rod. (Gen. viii.) So, the angels that came to Lot were called men in some places, and angels in another. They were called men after they were stated to be angels. (Gen. xix.) Things in Scripture are often represented according to their appearance. Joshua is represented as commanding the sun to stand still, and the sun as obeying him. So the Catholic continues to call the elements bread and wine after consecration, and yet he believes in the change.

What will we do with the word "body" in the first extract from St. Paul? If we construe it literally, and say that it was a literal partaking of a real body, then the sense is entirely consistent with the Catholic view. In the first extract the apostle says "communion of the body," and in the second "guilty of the body," "not discerning the body." Now if the word "body" be used figuratively in one of these places, must it not be used in the same sense in the other passages? Is it not used in all the three cases to designate the real body?

"Guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." What is the meaning of this phrase, as shown by Scripture usage? "He is guilty of death;" referring to the punishment. (Matt. xxvi, 66.) "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty

of all." (St. James ii, 10.) This case from St. James is the only parallel case in the New Testament. Here the phrase is applied to the object against which the offence was committed. In like manner the offence of an unworthy communion is against the body of our Lord. So, if the body and blood of Christ be present in the Eucharist, we can well see how St. Paul could use the expression "guilty of the body and blood."

"Not discerning the Lord's body." We are first told by St. Paul, that the party is guilty of the body; and then afterwards we are told that he drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the body. If the body be not present, how could it be discerned, But if the body be present, and be received as profane food, then we can well understand how the unworthy communicant would not discern the body.

It would seem that the passages from St. Paul are not only consistent with the Catholic view, but that the literal sense can alone give them their legitimate force and effect. When the language of St. Paul is taken in connection with that of Christ in the sixth of John and in the subsequent words of institution, the unity, simplicity, and force of the Catholic view, can be seen at once. We have one united and consistent view, running through a number of passages, and harmonizing with the whole and forming one plain and simple system of interpretation. The arguments in support of Christianity, when taken and considered separately, are not so strong and conclusive as when united. Like the ten thousand small streams, that, separately considered, are insignificant, yet when united, form the mighty river, rolling its resistless volume to the ocean: so, the arguments of Christianity, when taken separately may fail to convince, yet when united and considered as a whole, they pour their com-

bined proof in one overpowering stream upon the mind. In like manner, the proofs of that wonderful doctrine the Real Presence, when taken separately, do not seem so conclusive as when combined and viewed in their concentrated force. It is then that the harmonious and beautiful features of that tender and sublime faith appear in their united consistency. So strong are the proofs from the most simple and unequivocal construction of the language of the Scriptures, that if the doctrine was not so hard to flesh and blood, it would seem that there never could have existed any doubt upon the subject.

That it is a contradiction of our senses and impossible.

These objections are much relied upon by most Protestant writers, such as Mr. Hallam, Dr. Clark, Mr. Horne, Dr. Tomline, and others.

Mr. Horne tells us that "whatever is repugnant to natural reason cannot be the true meaning of the Scriptures."

In what essential particular does this assumption differ from the very basis upon which the Infidel stands? They are both founded upon the supposed sufficiency of human reason to determine the essential laws of matter, and the rules by which God should govern the world, and the limits of His power. The Infidel takes the Scriptures, and gives them what he thinks a natural and proper construction, and he finds therein stated, facts and doctrines at war with his reason and his experience; and he, therefore, rejects the entire system. Mr. Horne is less clear, and not so consistent. He first admits that the Scriptures are true — that they reveal stupendous mysteries, proven by stupendous miracles; and after these admissions, whatever construction, however plain, simple, and natural, which evolves a doctrine "repugnant to natural

reason," or what he may consider such, he rejects. In other words, he prunes off all absurd shoots from the tree of Christianity, until he brings it to that form of abstract ideal beauty, existing in his own mind. The Infidel, upon the basis of the sufficiency of his reason to determine what is possible with God, and what sort of government God ought to give to man, rejects the entire system. Not so with Mr. Horne. He admits the system, but tears it into fragments, and then selects only such as may suit his "natural reason."

We shall proceed to examine these arguments at one view, for they are all essentially based upon the same principle; i. e., the ground of physical impossibility.

We have already spoken of known miracles, as being violations or suspensions of the known laws of nature. We find, as a part of the known laws of nature, that two substances cannot occupy the same space at the same time and that the same body cannot occupy different spaces at the same time. If we should see a single body occupy different spaces, or two bodies the same space, at the same time, we are competent to say that it is a miracle. But while we could well say that such an event was a miracle, could we undertake to say that such an event is impossible? There is immeasurable distance between the two! In one we undertake only to determine what is consistent with the present known laws of nature; but in the other, we assume to put limits to the Eternal. What ideas have mere finite beings of Infinite power? Just in the same proportion as finite to infinite — as time to eternity.

The Protestant philosopher admits that God spoke the world into existence from nothing — that miracles are not only possible, but have occurred — yet when told that the same Infinite Creator can suspend, modify, over-

come, or change any of the laws of nature, and can give to a body some of the properties of the spirit, he objects, upon the ground of impossibility. He concedes that some of the laws of matter are within the power of God, but insists that others are not. And such objection is simply based upon the results of his limited experience of an existing system; when he knows absolutely nothing of mere possible systems; and could not, therefore, pretend to form any accurate conception concerning them.

The properties of matter were given it by the Creator, when He formed the universe from nothing. He who made, surely can destroy, suspend, or change. If God can take from matter one property, or overcome or suspend, for the time, its effect, upon what principle of reason can we say that He cannot do so in reference to another or to several? We believe that God created spirits. These we consider not subject to the laws of matter. The Atheist rejects the belief in the existence of the soul, because the eye and knife of the surgeon cannot detect its seat in the human brain. And he does this notwithstanding he knows we have no accurate conceptions of the magnitude or minuteness of organized bodies. He knows that minute insects exist, with perfect organizations, hundreds of which can sport in a single drop of water; and that the flea, when examined by a microscope, appears a horrid monster of enormous size. The Protestant believes that Satan is a created but fallen spirit; but he tempts men in Europe, Asia, America, and Africa, at the same time. Now, upon what principle of reason or philosophy can we say that God has power over some of the properties of matter, and not over all? If God can create a spirit, could He not impress a portion or the whole of its properties upon a body, and overcome or suspend some or all of the properties of matter,

at the same time? In other words, could not God, by His infinite power take from a body, or overcome, for the time, that property which prevents it from occupying two or more places at the same time? Who is that philosopher who would venture to say that Christ, who raised his own body from the grave, could not give that body the property in question? Can any man with all his pride of intellect, have sufficient confidence in his imaginary knowledge of mere possible systems, as to put it against the assertion of God?

There are metaphysical but no physical, impossibilities with God. The former result from the unchangeable character of His attributes. When the Infidel alleges truly that God could not make two hills without a valley between, the impossibility is metaphysical, not physical. The valley is a part of the two hills, and it is metaphysically impossible for God to do and not to do, the same thing at the same time. But all material things were created by God, and He has, for that reason, perfect and unlimited physical dominion over them to do anything He pleases that is not, in its effects, contrary to His own nature. The presence of Christ's body in the Eucharist cannot be against the character of God, and cannot be physically impossible. In Scripture, we are assured of metaphysical impossibilities with God, but it would be difficult to find any intimation that there could be any physical impossibility with Him. On the contrary, our Lord, when speaking of a supposed physical impossibility, declares that "all things are possible with God." There is no limit to this general declaration, and no qualification of it, as applicable to the class of possibility our Lord had in His mind when using these broad words.

If our knowledge of the existing laws of matter ought

to have any effect upon our ideas of physical possibility or impossibility with God, then I must say, that the position of the Atheist is more consistent than that of those who first concede that God can control some of the laws of matter and then deny His power over others. The Atheist lays down a consistent rule, when he will admit of no interference to the laws of matter. But the Protestant philosopher admits the power of God over the subject matter, and then presumes to set limits to the power itself.

That the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is a most incomprehensible mystery, and a most stupendous miracle, must be conceded. It is like any other mystery. Human reason cannot fathom mysteries. If it could, it could fathom everything. There could then be no limits to its power. We should be as wise as our Creator. No man can comprehend the mysterious union of the human and Divine in Christ. Had I waited until I could comprehend that mystery, I should never have been a Christian.

There are many of the most familiar facts that we cannot comprehend. How is it that a single spark will set on fire and consume a whole city? How does the fire increase? How is it that the simple will of a man will put into instant motion all his muscular powers, and at once overcome some of the cardinal laws of matter? How is it that the heart, from our birth to our death, never ceases its pulsations day or night? What power keeps it going? How is it that the moment the mysterious principle of life is extinguished, our bodies become like any other inert mass of matter? I suppose if an individual was brought up on a solitary island, with no opportunity to see or hear of a single instance of death, that at the age of thirty, he would have no con-

ception of death, and would think it impossible if suggested to him. Even with our conclusive knowledge of the fact, people in health never feel like dying, and most of them act as if they never expected to die.

How to explain the mystery of the Trinity I cannot tell. But on the other hand, I cannot see how I can reject the belief of this great mystery, without holding Christ to be a mere impostor. Nor can I understand how He could be either a Mediator or Redeemer, unless the doctrine of the Trinity be true. The doctrine of original sin presents many difficulties; but reject it, and then I cannot understand how Christ could be a Redeemer at all or what He had to redeem us from. Take away any of these doctrines, and we have but the shadow of Christianity left. The confident Socinian thinks that the absurdity of the doctrine of the Trinity is mathematically demonstrable. But all this, against the clear revelation of Jesus Christ, does not amount to anything. We find ourselves too often mistaken in reference to abstract matters to rely with any confidence upon our weak ideas of such things.

The evidence of some of our senses in receiving the Eucharist, ought not, any more than our abstract ideas of possibility, to influence us to doubt a revealed truth, especially a mystery. It may be a theme for ignorant ridicule or senseless declamation, but will hardly stand the test of theological or scientific truth. Philosophy and experience teach us that some of our senses at times deceive us

Reflections.

While I readily and cheerfully admit that there is a mystery and a miracle in the Real Presence, and that I cannot comprehend the mere manner of this mystery, I

can see in the institution itself the utmost reason, beauty, and love. In other words, I can see the best reasons for its institution, the greatest beauty in its doctrine, and the utmost display of love in its administration.

Who ever has read the Bible, and has any tolerable knowledge of God's dealings with His servants, must have been struck with the fact, that He often tested their faith in the most severe and conclusive form. These tests were not designed for the information of God, but for the benefit of His servants. It is right and beneficent, in the nature of the relation of servant and master, that the fidelity of the servant should be submitted to a conclusive test. It is good for the servant himself, especially when his eternal welfare depends upon his strict fidelity.

The examples we find in the Old and New Testaments show the utility of tests of faith. These tests all passed away with the old dispensation. As Christ left us a finished and universal system, which is to endure unto the end of the world, and applicable to all nations, in all subsequent time, it would seem to have been reasonable and just, in itself, that He should establish a permanent test of faith, as enduring and uniform as faith itself. And if any test of faith was to remain, what could be more conclusive than the doctrine of the Real Presence?

It requires a much greater degree of humble faith to believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, than in a mere symbolical presence. This is conclusively shown by the fact that most of those who believe in the metaphorical sense, rely upon the testimony of their senses, and upon their abstract ideas of possibility. When they tell me that they believe it impossible for the body of Christ to be present in the Eucharist, they tell me, in substance, that if they were satisfied that

such a doctrine was revealed in Scripture, they would reject the entire system of Christianity itself; for it is clear, that a man cannot believe that which he considers impossible.

The man that sincerely believes in the doctrine of the Real Presence has no seeds of infidelity in his mind. Such a man relies with implicit and unfaltering faith upon the Word of God. It is much easier, and requires a much less degree of faith, to believe in the miracles of the dim, distant past, than in those that are alleged to occur in our own presence, and in contradiction to some of our senses. We may believe, upon the Word of God, that the sense of Abraham and Lot, and others, were deceived; but when, upon the same Word of God, we are required to believe that our own senses are deceived in part, then comes the genuine and living test of faith in the Word of God, and the truth of the whole system.

In looking over the chapters of the New Testament, especially the Gospels, one cannot but be forcibly struck with the great and paramount importance of faith. Our Saviour never failed to reward this cardinal virtue. In some cases He went out of the usual course of His ministry to reward it, as in the case of the woman of Canaan. He never failed to express His warm approbation of every confiding display of it. We find Him often reproving His disciples for their want of faith. And while our Lord was so careful to inculcate the absolute necessity of this first fundamental principle, He was no less careful to condemn that vice in the human heart which is the most determined enemy of faith — pride. There is no doctrine that so forcibly inculcates simple and unflinching faith as the doctrine of the Real Presence; and there is no doctrine that requires a greater

disregard of the natural pride of the human mind.

It was evidently the intention of Christ to keep the faith pure and entire. In the nature of the system it could not accommodate its truths to the views of men. It was, and ever must be, one and inflexible. While our Lord and His apostles, as to the mere manner of inculcating truth, were as kind and gentle as could have been desired, they never softened the doctrines themselves, for the purpose of gaining converts. And every attempt to extend the principles of the system, either by latitudinarian construction, or by any other means, so as to bring it down to the comprehension of natural reason, or the loose opinions of men, is only so much injury to the purity of the system itself. Like the idle attempt to increase the value of the circulating medium by debasing the coin, every attempt to shake this unchangeable system to suit the humors and versatilities of men, must necessarily render the system less lovely and beautiful, and, therefore, in the end, less attractive to the really pious and virtuous. In this way the progress of the system itself would be retarded. But by requiring a firm and implicit belief in continued displays of omnipotent power and this upon the once-delivered and unqualified Word of God, and in opposition to some of our own senses, our Lord has given us, not only one of the most practical and severe tests of faith, but has given us a golden tie that binds us still more powerfully to the cause of virtue. For what can more powerfully impress the human soul than this awfully sublime and tender faith? What can more fully display, and continue to display, that invincible love wherewith Christ has loved us? When we look back over His mortal career, and see how much He suffered, how many most grievous insults He endured, and then reflect that all this was

purely voluntary, we cannot think that this great display of His love, is unbecoming His unbounded mercy towards those who love Him.

The legitimate and natural effect upon the mind of the humble and sincere believer in the Catholic view, cannot be well described in words. It would seem manifest that such a belief must fill the mind and soul with the most tender and fervent impulses. Well might the Infidel Voltaire say, "Behold the man, who, amidst the awful ceremonies of the mass receives the holy communion. His whole soul is seized and strongly affected. Hardly does he breathe. He is detached from every earthly thing—he is united to his God. God is incorporated with his flesh and blood. Who will dare—who possibly can, after such an action, be guilty of any future relapses into sin? Is it possible to imagine a mystery that could bind a man more forcibly to virtue?"

The following extract from a very recent work—"Hilliard's Six Months in Italy"—describes the services at Christmas, at Peter's, Rome: "High Mass was said by the Pope in person, and the responses were sung by the choir. He performed the service with an air and manner expressive of true devotion, and though I felt that there was a chasm between me and the rite which I witnessed, I followed his movements in the spirit of respect, and not of criticism. But one impressive and overpowering moment will never be forgotten. When the tinkling of the bell announced the elevation of the Host, the whole of the vast assemblage knelt or bowed their faces. The pavement was suddenly strewn with prostrate forms. A silence like that of death fell upon the church, as if some celestial vision had passed before the living eyes, and hushed into stillness every pulse of human feeling. After a pause of a few seconds, dur-

ing which every man could have heard the beating of his own heart, a band of wind instruments, near the entrance, of whose presence I had not been aware, poured forth a few sweet and solemn strains, which floated up the nave and overflowed the whole interior. The effect of this invisible music was beyond anything I have ever heard or expect to hear. The air seemed stirred with the trembling of angelic wings, or as if the gates of heaven had been opened, and a "wandering breath" from the songs of seraphs had been borne to the earth. How fearfully and wonderfully are we made! A few sounds, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been merely a passing luxury to the ear, heard at this moment, and beneath this dome, were like a purifying wave, which, for an instant, swept over the soul, bearing away with it all the soil and stains of earth, and leaving it pure as in infancy. There was, it is true, a reflux tide; and the world, displaced by the solemn strain, came back with the echo; but though we "cannot keep the heights we are competent to gain, we are the better for the too brief exaltation."

The eloquent Protestant has beautifully described his own feelings; but who shall adequately describe those of the humble Catholic? I cannot. Language is poor. There are some holy things beyond its power.

In conclusion I may say that the language of Luther in regard to the consent and authority of the Fathers in support of the literal sense, is very forcible.

"That no one among the Fathers," says he, "numerous as they are, should have spoken of the Eucharist, as these men do, is truly astonishing. Not one of them speaks thus. There is only bread and wine, or, the body and blood of Christ are not present. And, when we reflect how often the subject is treated by them, it ceases

to be credible, it is not even possible, that not so much as once, such words as these should have dropped from some of them. Surely it was of moment that men should not be drawn into error. Still, they all speak with such precision, evincing that they entertained no doubt of the presence of the body and blood! Had this not been their conviction, can it be imagined that, among so many, the negative opinion should not have been uttered on a single occasion? On other points this was not the case. But our Sacramentarians, on the other hand, can proclaim only the negative or contrary opinion. These men, then, to say all in one word, have drawn their notions neither from the Scriptures nor the Fathers." (*Defensio verborum; Coenae*, T. viii, p. 391; Edit. Wittemb. 1557, cited *Con. H & B.*, 317.)

It certainly is most unaccountable that, while so many Fathers have, beyond all question, maintained the literal sense, in terms too plain to be misunderstood, that no one opposed to such a view could ever be found to say in plain, explicit, negative terms, "The body and blood of Christ are not present." Certainly, if those who did support the literal sense, did speak in plain terms, those who did oppose it, if any, ought to have spoken in terms equally explicit. An explicit and plain affirmative assertion of such a doctrine, would instantly produce as plain and explicit a negative, if such was intended. Direct negative must be the opposite of any direct proposition, and would naturally be expressed in opposite terms, and, therefore, be equally plain.

CHAPTER XII

PENANCE, PURGATORY, AND INDULGENCES

The general nature of the Sacrament of Penance.

That the great end and purpose of the mission of Christ, was to rescue fallen man from sin, must be conceded by all who really believe in His divine character. That the blood of Christ was most ample to perfect the new law, and put it in a shape for practical administration, in this present mode of our existence, must also be conceded. As we have before insisted, the mercy of Christ was displayed in perfecting the system itself, but when it was once adopted it became a matter of irrevocable promise — a matter of law. As judged by this law (which law is the result of free grace), we can merit the forgiveness of sins. Our obedience to this law will entitle us to apply the merits of Christ to ourselves. He says, substantially: "If you will obey this law, you may call my merit your own, and receive the reward accordingly."

We shall assume that man, under the law of Christ, does possess free agency — that he can commit sins before baptism — that he can commit them afterwards — and that he can obtain forgiveness in both cases.

That baptism is for the remission of past sins, is clear from the simple and explicit statement of St. Peter to the believing Jews on the day of Pentecost. They cried

out: "What shall we do?" and St. Peter promptly answered: "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins." He did not tell them to believe, because he saw that they did already believe; and he, therefore, did not do that which would have been idle. Now it is clear that either baptism and repentance are both required for the remission of sins, or that neither is. If we can take out baptism, we can take away repentance. They are both closely joined together by the copulative conjunction, and must form requisites to remission of sins. The language is clear and explicit.

When we look into the system of Christ, we see that He instituted a visible association of men, to which He gave a code of law for the government of each member, and of the whole — that He bestowed upon the officers of this visible continuing corporation, all the necessary powers to enforce the practical operation of His law in this world. We see that He used men as His agents, for the application of the law to particular cases. For this reason He instituted external visible ordinances or sacraments, as channels of grace and remission. The administration of these is committed to the officers of His own kingdom. It could not, in the very nature of things, have been otherwise. If we once concede Christ to have been a lawgiver at all, then we must concede that a visible organization of those submitting to His government would follow — that visible Sacraments must exist in a visible Church; and that where those sacraments do exist, the only purpose they can exist for, must be as channels of grace and remission. If a lawgiver, Christ must administer His own law; either directly by Himself, or through His agents or officers.

If, then, the visible external sacrament of baptism was

given for the remission of past sins, and this sacrament cannot be repeated, is it not necessary, in the very nature of Christ's beautiful and harmonious system, that another visible sacrament should exist for the remission of sins committed after baptism? Are not sins committed after baptism as great if not greater, than the same sins when committed before baptism, and equally as difficult to remit? Is not the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper intended for believers only?

With regard to the faith of the Catholic Church in reference to this Sacrament, we shall quote the language of Dr. Wiseman, as found in his Moorfield Lectures, vol. 2, p. 10:

"We believe, therefore, that the sacrament of penance is composed of three parts — contrition, or sorrow — confession, or its outward manifestation — and satisfaction, which, in some respects is a guarantee of perseverance in that which we promise."

By contrition the Catholic Church means all that any other Church means by repentance. The Catholic Church, therefore, not only requires all that any other church does, but also the additional requisites of confession and satisfaction. And all those must be performed worthily, in order to obtain the grace of the sacrament.

It is perfectly natural that the proud should consider confession as a burden, while it is equally natural that the humble should esteem it as a privilege. The truly humble penitent will naturally seek relief in confession. We see this proven by general experience. The most penitent criminals are always most willing to make a true confession of their crimes. The tribunal of confession is a kind retreat for the truly sorrowing. It was given by our Lord in compassion to those who take up their cross, and meekly follow Him, as He required.

Did Christ confer upon the apostles the powers to remit and retain sins?

After our Lord had risen from the grave, and before He ascended into heaven, He said unto His disciples:

“Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit (in the Douay Bible forgive) they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” (John xx, 23.)

The sense is the same in both translations, as to remit and forgive sins, mean the same thing. That an entire forgiveness was meant, cannot be doubted. The language is general, and not limited; and must be as extensive in meaning, as the same expressions used in other passages; as for example in Luke vii, 47, 48; Matt. ix, 2.

From this plain and explicit passage, it is clear that our Lord conferred upon the apostles the power to forgive or remit sins. But there was also another power bestowed upon the apostles the power to *retain sins*. And not only were these powers bestowed upon the Apostles but our Lord expressly pledged Himself that the exercise of these powers should be ratified by Him, in the same way that He pledged Himself to ratify in heaven, what they should do under the power to bind and loose. (Matt. xviii, 18.)

In bestowing these important powers, did our Lord do an idle and useless thing? What did He intend by the very act of conferring them? Surely nothing else but that they should be put into practical operation. They could not have been given without intending to accomplish some great end. The very act of conferring these powers was, in itself, a command to use them for the purpose intended. When the Constitution of the United States confers certain powers upon the different

departments of government, it was intended that they should be put into practical operation; and the officer who fails to do so is guilty of a dereliction of duty.

If, then, these powers were given for practical application, it follows invincibly, that the right to use all the means necessary to carry them into full and complete operation, was also given, as inseparable incidents of the powers themselves. To give the powers, and, at the same time, to deny the use of all the means necessary to carry them into execution, would have been entirely idle; because it would have defeated the very purpose had in view, when giving the powers themselves. It is a plain and fixed principle of the civil law, as well as of the law of common sense and of pure justice, to confer the use of the necessary means with the power itself. To give the power and withhold the means, would be about as sensible and efficient, as the exhortation, "be ye clothed and fed." The incident must always follow the principle. Thus Chancellor Kent, speaking of a decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, says:

"The powers given to the government imply the ordinary means of execution; and the government in all sound reason and fair interpretation must have the choice of the means which it deems the most convenient and appropriate to the execution of the power." (1 Kent, 252.)

It would seem impossible for any fair and logical mind, after due consideration, to deny the truth of either of these two propositions: 1. That the power to forgive and the power to retain sins, were conferred upon the apostles; 2. That with the main powers, were also given all the necessary incidents, to enable the apostles to carry the powers into practical effect.

These two positions being true, it follows that remis-

sion of sins committed after baptism, could only be had through the exercise of this power by the apostles. For it will be observed, that they had not only the power to remit, but also to retain sins. Both powers were given at the same time; and both were equally intended for practical application to individual cases. If the transgressor could obtain remission, without the consent of the apostles, then their power to retain sins would have been idle, because inefficient. Christ meant something effectual in giving the power to retain sins; and, therefore, He could not have intended to confer a contradictory power upon others. He would not give the power to the apostles, and require them to exercise it, and promise Himself to ratify their acts, and at the same time give the party offending, the power to escape the exercise of this function. He said explicitly, "Whose soever sins ye retain they are retained;" and He could not, therefore, violate this promise. If the party offending could obtain remission of sins, without applying to the apostles, who had the power to retain, as well as to remit; then, as a matter of course, he would not apply to them, for fear they would retain his sins. In practical effect, the exercise of these two most important powers would have been defeated, unless we concede that, when given, they were intended as exclusive and supreme.

The apostles, then, had the exclusive power to forgive and retain sins. What is sin? It is a violation of the law of God. One violation of this law constitutes one sin, and two or more violations constitute sins. Each transgression constitutes a separate and distinct offence. It is so in all laws defining crime. If a man steal two different pieces of property, at different times, he commits two separate and distinct offences.

The power to remit and the power to retain sins, were

the powers to remit or retain each particular transgression of the law. How, then, could the apostles remit or retain sins unless they knew what they were? It was not intended that these great powers should be exercised blindly. It could not have been intended that they should have the powers to remit and retain sin in one undistinguished mass; because the authority was to remit sins, not sin. If they could remit and retain sin, not sins, without distinguishing between different violations of the law, then the whole end and purpose of these powers would have been substantially defeated. Such a view would confound all distinctions between different sins, and different individuals; and would, by this confusion of all just distinctions, render the exercise of these powers useless. How could the apostles tell what sins to remit or retain, unless they first knew what they were?

The only way in which the apostles could know the secret sins or deeds of individuals, was by their confession. As the apostles had the right to remit or retain, they had the right to know the sins committed; and as the power, unless exclusive, would have been idle, it was the duty of all to apply to them. The facts being peculiarly within the knowledge of the party committing the sins, it was his duty to state them. The power given to the apostles to do certain things, imposed upon the parties governed, the corresponding duty to obey the apostles in respect to those things. As all sins are but transgressions of the law, the Church has the right to know them for two reasons: 1. Because her jurisdiction extends to all violations of the law she was left to execute; and her entire success and purity require this knowledge; 2. Because it is necessary for the safety of each individual member.

*Did these powers descend to the successors of the
Apostles?*

I have endeavored to show, in another place, that Christ did create a permanent system; and for that reason, the provisions of His code were generally permanent. In other words, the permanent provisions of any permanent code must constitute the general rule, while the temporary provisions would constitute the exceptions. All the provisions of such a code are, therefore, *prima facie* permanent; and the exceptions must be so marked, either by express words or by the nature of the power conferred or command given, as to show that they are temporary only. He who alleges exceptions to a general rule, or to a *prima facie* case, must show them. This rule results from the plainest principles of right reason. When we look into the Constitution of the United States (which organized a permanent system of government in the contemplation of the theory itself), we find that there is not a single permanent provision expressly marked, as such, while the temporary provisions are so marked. Where permanent powers are conferred, they are given without any limitation, as to time — as the power to collect taxes, borrow and coin money, regulate commerce, declare war, etc. But the temporary provisions are expressly marked, so as to be readily distinguished from the permanent features of this instrument; as, for example, in clause 3, section 1, and in clause 1, section 9, and in clause 2, section 3, of article 1, and in article 5. It is much easier to expressly mark each of the few exceptions than to expressly mark each of the numerous cases coming under the general rule.

It would seem clear that this rule is equally as applica-

ble to the system of Christ as to that of any other law-giver. That He did organize a permanent system, is certain; and that the great and overwhelming mass of the provisions of His code are permanent and component parts of this system of law, is equally certain.

It is true: 1. That the act of conferring these powers upon the apostles was a command to exercise them in proper cases; 2. That the powers are such, in their very nature, as may come down, through the Church, to the end of time.

In the commission, the apostles were expressly commanded to teach all nations to observe all things whatsoever they — the apostles — had been commanded to observe. As I have elsewhere endeavored to show, this wide commission, by its very express terms, carried forward to the successors of the apostles, in their proper capacities, all the powers, promises, and duties incumbent on, or given to, the apostles themselves, except those marked as temporary, either in express words, or by the peculiar nature of the act to be performed. The apostles having been commanded to exercise these powers, and they, being permanent in their nature, and nowhere marked as temporary, must still reside in the Church, the permanent institution created by Christ Himself. Those who once concede that these powers were originally conferred upon the apostles, will find it very difficult to escape this conclusion; for if they can defeat the present existence of these powers in this case, they can, upon the same basis of reasoning, defeat all the powers of the Church, and the entire system itself.

Let us inquire into the purposes for which these powers were originally delegated. They were certainly bestowed by our Lord for great and beneficial ends. It was not an idle display of words only. Far from it. What, then,

could these purposes be? It could not have been a mere personal privilege given to the apostles alone. We cannot conceive of any practical ends to be accomplished by it, as such. Miracles were special gifts. This gift of miracles was given to the apostles individually, as proofs of their veracity as witnesses of the facts they saw, and of the discourses they heard. The words of Christ was the evidence of their commission as officers of the Church, in the same way that these same words will constitute the evidence of the authority of their successors to the end of time.

But the power to remit, and the power to retain sins, were not required as proofs of the veracity of the apostles as witnesses, or of their being agents of Christ. For what purposes were these powers given? They were given for the safety of the Church, and of each individual member, as already stated in substance. What other purpose could our Lord have intended to accomplish? The exercise of these powers could constitute no proofs of the truth of Christianity; for the truth of the system had first to be conceded, before the exercise of these powers could be invoked by the individual. If he did not first believe in the exercise of these powers, he could not ask for their exercise.

The very same reasons that induced our Lord to confer those powers upon the apostles at the beginning, would have induced Him to continue them in the Church to the end of time. That the actual and practical exercise of these powers was merciful and beneficial to the members of the Church, in the days of the apostles, must be conceded; for after all the suggestions of pride, and the cavils of prejudice, every humble Christian must concede, at last, that such an institution is beneficial. It may, then, be well asked, are we living under a crippled

and mutilated code of law, which has lost some of its most beautiful and consolatory features? If the powers to forgive and retain sins, and the corresponding duty of confession, were confined to the apostolic day, how do we enjoy any benefits from the same? What good does it do us to know that the apostles did forgive sins — that the happy and favored Christians of that day did enjoy the blessed consolation of this certain and not mere inferential forgiveness? Could that have been the intention of Christ? Did He design His system to be perfect at the beginning and imperfect afterwards? Did He intend to make this great difference among Christians? If so, why? Is there any reason for it — any Scripture? We are all living under the same dispensation. What was necessary then is necessary now. As witnesses the apostles left their testimony with the Church, and we enjoy the benefit of it at this day, as much as our brethren did in their day. If these great and important powers to remit and retain sins be taken away, we are, indeed, left in a state of destitution. This cannot be true. Either Christ never gave these powers, or they yet remain in the Church, and will continue there, with the other permanent powers, to the end of time.

There are the best reasons for the practice of confession. Is not man a frail creature that needs discipline and aid at every step of his perilous journey through life? And yet can anything defiled enter heaven? The struggle for a seat in that happy abode, is a great struggle. The rewards are unspeakable in degree, and endless in duration. They are worth a life of humility and labor. And for these reasons man needs a test of his faith and practice at all times. His memory needs to be refreshed. He needs these tests while he has time to amend, if wrong. After death, it is too late. As the doctrine of

the Real Presence is a great test of faith in the truth of Christianity, so confession is a great test of virtuous practice. The proud cannot submit to it. Christ knew this, and He never intended to reward the proud. He pronounced a sweet blessing upon the poor in spirit; but He had no blessing for the proud. Confession strikes a fatal blow at pride. It humbles and corrects self-conceit. It is a great check upon self-delusion.

There are some things that we can know with certainty; and among them is the fact, that we did do a certain thing, and the motive with which we did it. These are facts within our own knowledge, and are of so plain a character, that we cannot be mistaken. There is no room for delusion. But when we come to make up our judgment as to the character of the act itself, then our self-love and our interest will be most apt to mislead us. If we confess to God alone, we have no one to instruct us as to the character of the particular act, or to cross-examine us as to the circumstances attending the act itself. The whole work we do ourselves, and we do not know whether we are certainly forgiven or not.

In confession it is different in some material respects. The penitent not only gives a statement of all the acts he has committed, that he himself esteems sinful, but he is subjected to cross-examination, that powerful test of truth. Did the most honest witness ever state all the material facts he knew, without cross-examination? Such instances are exceedingly rare; not because the witness does not desire to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; but because he cannot correctly judge as to all that is material. He will almost certainly omit some circumstance of importance. When we are not only required to confess to God, but to man

also, we have two checks instead of one. Besides this, there are many persons of the most pious dispositions, that are often afflicted with groundless scruples; and these find a complete relief and correction in confession. As every one has the right to select his own confessor, he can have recourse to that one in whose discretion and judgment he has the greatest confidence.

That God should select human agents to administer His law among men, is entirely consistent with the nature and purposes of His government. It was evidently the intent of our Lord to honor human nature. He died for it. He deemed it worthy to be trusted. His system, upon its face, shows the intimate union and mutual dependence that Christians should sustain to each other. His system is not based on universal suspicion.

The objection, based upon considerations of delicacy, is one that is without any real foundation in reason or Scripture.

The criminal law of the land defines and punishes a great variety of offences, some of them of a very indelicate character; and yet our courts of law are compelled to execute justice upon offenders openly by a public trial. No code of law could pass over these indelicate offences without an abdication of justice, and the consequent increase of these very crimes.

The rights of the church, and the salvation of her children, cannot be sacrificed to motives of mere delicacy. In the pure and impartial eye of God, sins are obnoxious in proportion to their turpitude. It was to avoid the scandals of public confession, that secret sins are confessed as secret, and kept sacred by the proper officer. In this way, the Church and the individual members receive the benefits flowing from the sacrament, while the injuries that might result from a public confession are

avoided. And one of the most powerful arguments in favor of confession is the fact, that a priest was never known wrongfully to reveal anything confided to him in the tribunal of penance. It does not matter whether he has subsequently become an Atheist, or even a criminal, his lips are sealed in eternal silence.

Satisfaction.

This is the third part of the Sacrament of Penance. The Catholic Church holds that, while the guilt and eternal punishment due to sin are remitted in repentance, confession and absolution, there yet remains some duty to be performed by the penitent. In the accurate language of Dr. Wiseman:

“We believe that upon this forgiveness of sins — that is, after the remission of that eternal debt which God in His justice awards to transgression against His law — He has been pleased to reserve a certain degree of inferior or temporary punishment appropriate to the guilt which had been incurred; and it is on this part of the punishment alone that, according to the Catholic doctrine, satisfaction can be made to God.” (Moorfield Lec., vol. 2, 35.)

If there be any free agency in man at all, so that he can obey or disobey the law of Christ at his own present election, then it follows necessarily, that he must voluntarily co-operate, to some extent at least, with the assisting grace of God, in the work of his own salvation. The only question is as to the amount and extent of this co-operation. The Catholic theory requires more, the Protestant theory less. This is the essence of the difference between the two theories, in reference to the remission of sins committed after baptism. If we can do anything at all in the great work of salvation, when

aided by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (always freely given to those who rightly seek it), there can be nothing more natural and reasonable in itself than that we should suffer some temporal punishment for our sins, not only as a partial atonement, but also as a useful correction of evil habits, and as evidence of a true repentance.

When we look into the Old Testament, and see the uniform course pursued by God towards His servants, when transgressing His law, we find abundant examples. When our first parents had fallen, and were restored by repentance through the merits of the future Messiah, the Almighty inflicted temporary punishments upon them, and all their posterity; and although the guilt of original transgression is remitted in baptism, we must all undergo the temporal punishments inflicted in the beginning. When God had put away the sin of David, Nathan said to him: "Because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child that is born unto thee shall surely die." (II Sam. xii, 14.) So, when the same King had sinned in numbering the people, the Lord gave him, upon his repenting, choice of one of three grievous temporal punishments. (II Sam. xxiv, 10-15.) So the Lord forgave the children of Israel in answer to the prayer of Moses, but at the same time declared that they should not see the land of promise. (Numbers xiv.)

This same temporal punishment was inflicted upon Moses and Aaron after they had been forgiven. (Numbers xx, 10, 29; Deut. xxxiv, 1-6.) Holy Job, when he had exceeded in speech, repented in dust and ashes. (Job xlii, 1-6.) The men of Nineveh, when the prophet had proclaimed their destruction, observed a general fast for three days, saying: "Who can tell if God will turn

away from his fierce anger, and we perish not?" (Jonas ii, 9.).

It is true that this infliction of temporal punishment after sins were forgiven, occurred under the old dispensation; but it is equally true, that they relied upon the same source of pardon as we; namely: the blood of Christ. They looked forward and we look backward, to the same atonement for sin, both original and actual. There were many things in the old law, and especially those things which naturally flow from our relation to God, which are contained in the new. Those temporary enactments, which were but the result of positive legislation, and which were adapted to the then condition of things, are no doubt laid aside. But the infliction of temporal punishment for sin, flows from the permanent relation we bear to God under both systems; and was not, therefore, repealed by the new law.

We not only find no intimation in the New Testament opposed to the practice of penitential works, but we find very clear evidence that they were continued. Our Lord expressly says that His followers shall fast. (Matt. ix, 15.) And we find it was the constant practice of the apostles and others in their day. So, when our Lord reproached the then existing generation, He referred to the example of the men of Nineveh, not only without censure, but with evident approbation. (Matt. xii, 41.)

The doctrine which is thus collected from the Word of God is reducible to these heads: 1. That God, after the remission of sin, retains a lesser chastisement in His power, to be inflicted on the sinner. 2. That penitential works, fasting, alms-deeds, contrite weeping, and fervent prayers, have the power of averting that punishment. 3. That this scheme of God's justice was not a part of the imperfect law, but the unvarying ordinance

of His dispensation, anterior to the Mosaic ritual, and amply confirmed by Christ in the Gospel. 4. That it consequently becomes a part of all true repentance to try to satisfy this divine justice, by the voluntary assumption of such penitential works as His revealed truth assures us have efficacy before Him.

The satisfaction already mentioned may be properly called prospective, because it is intended to avert that temporal punishment which has been reserved for the sinner. But there is a retrospective satisfaction of the most important character, without which there can be no remission of sins in the sacrament of penance. This consists in repairing so far as in our power, the injury we may have done to others. It is an essential act of justice towards an injured fellow-being that must be performed; otherwise the absolution granted will avail nothing. The stolen, or dishonestly obtained property, must be restored to its rightful owner; and amends must be made to the person whose character and feelings have been injured by slander or detraction.

Purgatory.

The Council of Trent declared, as the faith of the Catholic Church, "that there is a purgatory, and that the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar."

The doctrine of purgatory is most intimately connected with the doctrine of sacramental absolution and satisfaction, and legitimately springs from it. That there is a distinction in the guilt of different sins, must be conceded. All our criminal laws, and those of all nations, are founded upon this idea. To say that the smallest transgression, the result of inadvertence, is equal in

enormity to the greatest and most deliberate crime, is so utterly opposed to the nature of all law, and to the word of God, which assures us that men shall be punished or rewarded according to their works, (Rom. ii, 6.) as not to require any refutation. Our Lord assures us that men must give an account in the day of judgment for any idle word they speak; (Matt. xii, 36.) and St. John tells us that nothing defiled shall enter heaven, (Rev. xxi, 27.) Then St. John says there is a sin unto death, and there is a sin which is not unto death; (I John v, 16;) and he also tells us that "all unrighteousness is sin; and there is a sin not unto death." So we are told by the same apostle, that if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us, (I John i, 9.)

We must put all these texts together, and give them their full, harmonious, and consistent force. We must carry out the principles laid down to their fair and logical results. Suppose, then, a man speak an idle word, and die suddenly, before he has time to repent and confess his sin, will he be lost everlastingly? Must there not in the very nature of Christ's system be a middle state, wherein souls can be purged from their lesser sins? Was not the great Dr. Johnson right when he said, speaking of the Catholic faith in reference to purgatory?

"They are of opinion that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment, nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits; and, therefore, that God is graciously pleased to allow of a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see, sir, there is nothing unreasonable in this." (Boswell's Life of Johnson.) And in reference to prayers for the dead, the Doctor also maintained, that "if it be once established that there are souls in purgatory, it is

as proper to pray for them, as for our brethren of mankind, who are yet in this life."

It is clear that the practice of praying for the dead must rest upon the basis, that there is a middle state. It would be useless to pray for those in heaven, who needed no relief; and equally idle to pray for them who were beyond the reach of help.

It is related in the twelfth chapter of Second Macabees, that the valiant Judas collected and sent 12,000 drachmas of silver to Jerusalem "for sacrifices to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. And because he considered that they who have fallen asleep with godliness had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins."

It has been settled by the Catholic Church that this book constitutes part of the canon of the Old Testament, while it is not admitted by Protestants. But all must concede that it is authentic history, and shows the faith of the Jewish Church, one hundred and fifty years before Christ. It is still the faith of the Jews. Our Lord, in his discourses to the Jews, knew what their belief was.

That there is a distinction of sins and their punishments is clear from several texts besides those already referred to. (Matt. v, 22; Luke xii, 43-48; Matt. xxiii, 23; xvi, 27.)

There is a passage in one of St. Paul's Epistles that has always been held by the Church to relate to a middle state of purgation. The passage is this:

"Now if any man build upon this foundation of gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare

it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." (I Cor. iii, 12-15.)

There is a great deal more expressed in this passage, than would at first appear. Suppose a man had built only gold, silver, or precious stones, or all together, then he would be entitled to a reward, without suffering any loss. But suppose he had built only wood, hay or stubble, or all these together, he would be entitled to no reward, and could not be saved. It is only in the case where the gold, silver, or precious stones have been intermixed with the wood, hay, or stubble, that the builder can be saved, while he suffers loss himself. The apostle does not say that the party escaping is himself tried by fire, but he escapes as if so tried — comparing the ordeal through which he himself must pass, to that of fire. If the apostle had not added the words: "but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire," we could only have concluded that he alluded to the test of the work alone. But these words show that he first alludes to the test of the work; and, afterwards, to the ordeal through which the builder himself must pass, because of his having built such materials upon the foundation — Christ Jesus. To have intermixed such gross materials with those that were suitable for a foundation so precious, is a sin, for which the party must suffer loss, by being, for the time, deprived of heaven, and undergoing the punishment of purgation.

In reference to the testimony of the Ancient Fathers, I find the passages from their works bearing upon this

subject so well arranged by Dr. Wiseman, that I extract his quotations and remarks upon them entire. (Moorfield Lec. vol. ii, p. 50, sec. xi.)

“ Now nothing can be more simple than to establish the belief of the universal Church on this point. The only difficulty is to select such passages as appear the clearest.

“ I will begin with the very oldest Father of the Latin Church, Tertullian, who advises a widow ‘ to pray for the soul of her departed husband, entreating repose to him, and participation in the first resurrection, and making oblations for him on the anniversary day of his death, which, if she neglect, it may be truly said that she has divorced her husband.’ (De Monogamia, c, 10.) ” To make an oblation on the anniversary day of his death; to pray that he may have rest,—is not this more like our language and practice than those of any other religion in England? And does not Tertullian suppose that good is done to the faithful departed by such prayer? And, moreover, does he not prescribe it as a solemn duty, rather than recommend it as a lawful practice?

“ St. Cyprian thus writes: ‘ Our predecessors prudently advised that no heathen, departing this life, should nominate any churchman his executor; and should he do so, that no oblation should be made for him, nor sacrifice offered for his repose; of which we have had a late example, where no oblation was made, nor prayer, in his name, offered in the Church.’ It was considered, therefore, a severe punishment that prayers and sacrifices should not be offered up for those who had violated any of the ecclesiastical laws. There are many other passages in this Father; but I proceed to Origen, who wrote in the same century, and than whom no one can be clearer regarding this doctrine: ‘ When we depart this life, if we take with us virtues or vices, shall we receive reward

for our virtues, and shall those trespasses be forgiven to us which we knowingly committed? or shall we be punished for our faults, and not receive the reward of our virtues?' That is, if there be in our account a mixture of good and evil, shall we be rewarded for the good without any account being taken of the evil, or punished for the evil, without the good being taken into consideration? This query he thus answers: 'Neither is true; because we shall suffer for our sins, and receive the reward of our good actions. For if on the foundation of Christ you shall have built, not only gold, and silver, and precious stones, but also wood, and hay, and stubble, what do you expect when the soul shall be separated from the body? Would you enter into heaven with your wood and hay and stubble, to defile the kingdom of our God? or, on account of those incumbrances, remain without and receive no reward for your gold, and silver, and precious stones? Neither is this just. It remains, then, that you be committed to the fire, which shall consume the light materials; for our God, to those who can comprehend heavenly things, is called a consuming fire. But this fire consumes not that creature, but what the creature has himself built,—wood, and hay, and stubble. It is manifest, that, in the first place, the fire destroys the wood of our transgressions, and then returns to us the reward of our good works.' (Homil. xvi, al xii, in Jerem., T. iii, p. 231, 232.) Therefore, according to this learned Father, (two hundred years after Christ,) when the soul is separated from the body, if there be smaller transgressions, it is condemned to fire, which purges away those light materials, and thus prepares the soul for entering into heaven.

“ St. Basil, or a contemporary author, writing on the words of Isaiah, ‘Through the wrath of the Lord is

burned,' says that the things which are earthly shall be made the food of a punishing fire; to the end that the soul may receive favor and be benefited.

"In the same century, St. Cyril of Jerusalem thus expresses himself: 'Thus (in the liturgy of the Church) we pray for the holy Fathers and the bishops that are dead; and, in short, for all those who departed this life in our communion; believing that the souls of those for whom the prayers are offered, receive very great relief while this holy and tremendous victim lies upon the altar.' (Catech. Mystag. v. n. ix. x., p. 328.) St. Gregory of Nyssa thus contrasts the course of God's providence in this world with that in the next. In the present life, 'God allows man to remain subject to what he himself has chosen; that, having tasted of the evil which he desired, and learned by experience how bad an exchange has been made, he might again feel an ardent wish to lay down the load of those vices and inclinations which are contrary to reason; and thus, in this life, being renovated by prayers and the pursuit of wisdom, or, in the next, being expiated by the purging fire, he might recover the state of happiness which he had lost. . . . When he has quitted his body, and the difference between virtue and vice is known, he can not be admitted to approach the Divinity till the purging fire shall have expiated the stains with which his soul was infected. That same fire in others will cancel the corruption of matter and the propensity to evil.' (orat. de Defunctis, T. ii, 1066-S.) St. Ambrose, throughout his works has innumerable passages on this subject, and quotes St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, (iii, 15.) which you have heard already cited by the other Fathers: 'If any man's works burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.' I will quote one passage out of many: 'But

he shall be saved, yet so as by fire.' He will be saved, the apostle said, because his substance shall remain, while his bad doctrine shall perish. Therefore he said, yet so as by fire; in order that his salvation be not understood to be without pain. He shows that he shall be saved indeed; but he shall undergo the pain of fire, and thus be purified; not like the unbelieving and wicked man, who shall be punished in everlasting fire." (Comment. in 1 Ep. ad Cor., T. ii, in app., p. 122.) And in his funeral oration on the Emperor Theodosius he thus speaks: 'Give O Lord, rest to thy servant Theodosius, that rest which Thou hast prepared for Thy Saints. May his soul thither tend whence it came, where it cannot feel the sting of death, where it will learn that death is the termination, not of nature, but of sin. I loved him, therefore I will follow him to the land of the living; I will not leave him till, by my prayers and lamentations, he shall be admitted to the holy Mount of the Lord, to which his deserts call him.'

St. Epiphanius, in the same century: "There is nothing more opportune, nothing more to be admired, than the rite which directs the names of the dead to be mentioned. They are aided by the prayer which is offered for them, though it may not cancel all their faults. We mention both the just and sinners, in order that for the latter we may obtain mercy.' (Haer, lv. sive lxxv., T. i., p. 911.) St. Jerome: 'As we believe the torments of the devil, and of those wicked men who said in their hearts there is no God, to be eternal; so, in regard to those sinners who have not denied their faith, and whose works will be proved and purged by fire, we conclude that the sentence of the judge will be tempered by mercy.' (Comment. in c. lxxv. Isai., T. ii, p. 492.) Not to be tedious I will quote one Father more, the great St.

Augustine: 'The prayers of the Church,' he writes, 'or of good persons, are heard in favor of those Christians who departed this life, not so bad as to be deemed unworthy of mercy, nor so good as to be entitled to immediate happiness.'

"These passages contain precisely the same doctrine as the Catholic Church teaches; and had I introduced them into my discourse without telling you from whom they are taken, no one would have supposed that I was swerving from the doctrine taught by our Church. It is impossible to imagine that the sentiments of these writers agreed, on this point, with that of any other religion."

I will only add one extract to those given by the distinguished lecturer. It is the language of St. Monica, the mother of the great Augustine, addressed to him by her while she was on her deathbed. "Lay," then she said, "this body anywhere; let not the care of it in any way disturb you: this only I request of you, that you would remember me at the altar of the Lord, wherever you be." (T. i., L. ix. Confess., n. 27, col. 285.)

Indulgences.

No doctrine of the Catholic Church has been more misunderstood, or more distorted, than the article concerning Indulgences. The best method of correcting these misapprehensions on the part of sincere persons, is to give a clear statement of the doctrine itself. In the first place, an indulgence has not the slightest reference to future sin, and is not, therefore, any license to commit it in any form. Nor is it a remission of either the eternal guilt of sin, or of the eternal punishment due to it. It is simply a remission, in whole or in part, of the temporary punishment deserved for sins committed after baptism, or a commutation of that punishment.

In the Catholic theory, as we have seen, the interior or eternal guilt of sin, and the eternal punishment due to it, are both remitted by contrition, confession, and absolution, except in that class of cases wherein we have injured our neighbor, and wherein a further act — an act of just reparation — must be performed before the remission of the eternal guilt and punishment becomes complete. After the eternal guilt and punishment of sin have been remitted in the sacrament of penance, God has reserved a certain degree of mere temporary punishment, proportioned to the offence. The object of this temporary punishment is to make a partial atonement for the sin committed, to correct the evil habit, and to give evidence of a true repentance. The power to relax this temporary punishment, or to substitute another for it, as after-circumstances may justly require, is the power to grant an indulgence.

The power to grant indulgences is but a legitimate consequence resulting from the powers to bind and loose, to remit and retain sins, originally conferred by Christ upon the Church. These powers necessarily include the power and duty to determine the character of the particular sin committed after baptism, and the weight of the circumstances attending it, and to assess the amount, and designate the kind, of the temporary punishment named by the law of God. It is strictly a judicial power, applying the existing law to the facts and circumstances of each particular case. If this right and duty of the Church be conceded, then the right to mitigate this punishment, or to substitute another for it, as subsequent circumstances may justly require, must belong to the power that originally imposed this temporary punishment. It will be seen at once by the calm and sensible reader, that, in the contemplation of the Catholic theory,

the granting of an indulgence cannot affect, in any way, the eternal condition of the party to whom it is granted, but only his temporary condition.

This power of pardon or commutation after conviction and sentence, is retained by all civil governments. The exercise of it depends upon subsequent circumstances, unforeseen at the time the punishment was assessed. The object of criminal punishment is expiatory, preventive, and reformatory. The good conduct of the criminal during his imprisonment, may constitute strong evidence of a real reformation. It often happens that the executive of a state will pardon the convict at such a time as to remit the punishment in part only. It is not uncommon for pardon to be granted upon conditions, or only a few days before the expiration of the term of imprisonment fixed by the sentence, so as to restore the prisoner to the rights of citizenship.

The temporary punishment for sins inflicted by the ancient Church, consisted in abstaining from all amusements, giving the time of the sinner to prayer and good works, rigorous fasting, other penitential exercises, for and during a period of time proportioned to the nature of the offence. Sometimes this penance only lasted a few days, sometimes for several years, and in very extreme cases during life.

One of the means of procuring this mitigation of the temporal punishment inflicted, was the recommendation of the holy martyrs, given on the eve of their martyrdom.

I have included Penance, Purgatory, and Indulgences in one chapter, because they constitute, in fact, but portions of one subject. The limits of my work have not allowed me to notice more than the main points; and I must refer the reader, who desires more full and detailed information, to the Moorfield Lectures of Dr. Wise-

man, who has treated these different heads with great fulness and the most masterly ability. I will conclude this chapter with his summary of the grounds upon which the doctrine of Indulgences rests:

“From all I have said, you will easily conclude that our indulgence, and that of the ancient Church, rest upon the following grounds: First, that satisfaction has to be made to God for sin remitted, under the authority and regulation of the Church. 2d. That the Church has always considered herself possessed of the authority to mitigate by diminution or commutation, the penance which she enjoined; and that she has already reckoned such a mitigation valid before God, who sanctions and accepts it. 3d. That the sufferings of the saints, in union with, and by virtue of Christ’s merits, are considered available towards the granting of this mitigation. 4th. That such mitigations, when prudently and justly granted, are conducive towards the spiritual weal and profit of Christians.”

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE INVOCATION OF SAINTS; THEIR RELICS AND IMAGES

The invocation of saints.

In reference to the doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning the Invocation of Saints, the Council of Trent declares:

. . . “that the saints who reigned with Christ, offer up to God their prayers for men, that it is good and profitable, suppliantly to invoke them, and to fly to their prayers, help, and assistance, for the obtaining of benefits from God through His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, who is alone our Redeemer and Saviour.” (Sess. xxv.)

It will be seen that this language is very clear and distinct. That matters affirmed are simply these: 1. That the saints in glory offer up prayers for us. 2. That it is good and profitable to invoke them. 3. That this is done for the obtaining of benefits from God through His Son, who alone is our Redeemer and Saviour. By this decree it is not declared to be essential, but only good and profitable, to invoke the prayers of the saints in glory. It will also be observed, that the Giver of all the benefits asked for, is God Himself, who bestows them, in and through the merits of Christ; and that the saints who pray for us, are regarded simply as inferior petitioners, in behalf of their own brethren.

The Apostles' Creed, conceded by most Protestants to

contain true doctrine, it is said: "I believe in the communion of saints." What is meant by this communion of saints?

When we concede that our Lord was a Divine Law-giver, and that He organized a visible Church, we concede that this Church must be a continuing corporation. It is an artificial person, composed of all the members belonging to it in every age and nation. These members or corporators, in the contemplation of the theory never die. They change their state; but they, in fact, die not. They quit earth, and reach heaven; but they still live on. As never-dying members of one great corporate body, they are each and all interested in the success of the corporation; and as the aggregate rightful success of the whole is made up of the rightful success of each member, they are all interested in the welfare of each, and are thus all constituted "members one of another," as St. Paul says.

This apostle in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, and twelfth of first Corinthians, gives us the clearest statement. He therein calls the entire Church the body of Christ; and says that our Lord gave certain orders to the Church. And these different orders were given by Christ to the entire Church, not alone to the Church of the apostolic day. And as every member of the natural body must sympathize with every other; so, every member of this corporate body — the church — must equally sympathize with all the others. And as all the saints are immortal members of the same enduring corporation, and are each and all interested in the spiritual welfare of each and of the whole combined, they can assist each other; and this sweet relationship is fitly termed "the communion of saints."

That there is a connecting chain of sympathy and good

offices between the suffering saints on earth and their own brethren in heaven would seem to follow, not only from the very nature and purposes of the system of Christ, but from many facts expressly stated in the Scripture. (Matt. xxii, 30; xviii, 10; Heb. i, 14; Luke xv, 7-10; Apoc. viii, 3-4.)

In reference to these Dr. Wiseman says:

“From all this it is proved that the saints and angels know what passes on earth—that they are aware of what we do and suffer; otherwise they could not rejoice in any good that we do, nor resent any misfortune that befalls us. In the second place, we have it sufficiently proved that the saints do more than barely know and interest themselves about us, for they actually present our prayers to God and intercede in our behalf with Him. Here, then, is a basis, and a sufficient one, for the Catholic belief,—such a basis as surely should give rise to some doctrine or other in the true religion. Where is this doctrine to be found in those religious systems which reject and exclude all intercession of the saints, all intercourse between those on earth and their brethren in bliss? Assuredly these texts prove something. For if all contained in the Word of God is true, and must form a rule of faith, such clear testimony as this regarding the connection between mankind and the blessed, must form the subject of a doctrine. Where, then, is this found? Nowhere but in the Catholic belief,—that prayers are offered for us by the saints, and that, therefore, we may apply to them for their supplications.” (Moorfield Lec., vol. ii, 87.)

The moment we concede the existence of God and His superintending care over us, that moment it becomes as natural for us to pray as to breathe. And it is just as natural to pray for those we love as it is to pray for

ourselves. And by the law of Christ, it is our express duty to pray for even those who persecute us. (Matt. v, 44.)

In the last chapter of the Book of Job, the Lord directed Eliphaz to procure the prayers of his holy servant, saying: "My servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept." Moses often prayed for the chosen of Israel, and averted, by his prayers, the threatened wrath of God. In the New Testament it is shown to have been the universal practice for the saints to pray for one another, and that St. Paul constantly prayed for his brethren and often asked their prayers for himself. And St. James tells us that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James v, 16.) This he says with reference to prayers for others. So plainly is this principle established, that all professed Christians pray for each other.

This duty and utility of prayer must rest upon some great principle. As the practice is not an idle one, it must have its foundation in some great fundamental truth. It must rest upon the intimate connection between the seen and the unseen world — between the governing creator and the governed creature — upon the never-ceasing power and disposition of God to grant us favors, at all times, when we need and properly ask for them. And our duty to pray for each other arises from our natural relationship, and the duty we owe to our Lord, who desires alike the salvation of all men. Are we not all brethren? Are we not bound to extend our Master's Kingdom by every just means? Is not this right?

If, then, a saint, while on earth, can aid his brethren by his prayers, upon what principle can we say that his power for good ceases, when the same saint gets to

heaven? Can he not still make known his wishes to God? And has not the Almighty still the same power and disposition to hear the devout and humble petitions of His servants? Did the ardent Paul and the intrepid old Peter cease to love their brethren the moment they reached heaven? Are we not assured that faith and hope are swallowed up in absolute certainty in that blissful abode, while charity, the ever-beautiful, still lives on? And is not this sweet virtue called the greatest, because everlasting? Who can believe that the saints in glory forget to love their suffering brethren on earth? Is not such a theory one of the driest and most withering in the universe, and well suited, in its very nature, to the coldest heart and the most perverted understanding?

If the saints in glory love us, this love must be active and effectual. Of what value is a love that never does any good for the object beloved? Did our Creator implant in our hearts and souls the desire of immortality, without any intention to gratify so beautiful and so natural a wish? And will our Lord permit the saints in glory to love us, and of course ardently to desire our good, and yet not permit this holy love to do us any service? Why is this holy love and desire permitted to exist, if not for practical exercise? Are there no sweet prayers offered in heaven? Have the saints in glory no wishes to gratify, no favors to ask for their brethren in this tempting world? Who can believe that they love us not? And if they love us who can believe that they never pray for us?—that while they love us they are still indifferent as to our condition?—that if they do desire our good, they still dare not make these desires known? That if they do make them known, that still God will not gratify them, in proper cases? If the saints in glory

love us, and aid us, in what way can they help us more effectually than by praying for us, as they did while still on earth? What sort of a communion of saints is that which is limited alone to this poor earth? What would Christianity itself be worth if it did not look beyond the grave?

If it be true that the saints in heaven love us, that this love is active and efficient, and not merely passive and idle; and, therefore, that they can and do pray for us, surely it can be no wrong in us to ask their prayers, to fly to their help and assistance. To ask of our own brethren — the copartners of our joys and sorrows — to grant us a favor that they love to grant, and that affords them pleasure to perform, cannot be justly held to be erroneous. It would be a strange philosophy, and a still more singular theology, that would make it a crime to ask of a brother that which he had the power and the disposition to give; and which, in itself, was “good and profitable” to us, and no loss to him.

In fact, the objection to the invocation of saints, when calmly and thoroughly considered, resolves itself, at last, into an objection against the duty and utility of all prayer. For it would seem to be clear, that if we can pray for ourselves we can pray for others; that if our prayers can be effectual in the one case, they can in the other; that if we can pray for our brethren while we are in this state of being, we can still do so in the next.”

Is it true that, because the saints can know that we invoke their prayers, they must possess the “divine attribute of universal presence”? How do the saints know that a sinner on earth does penance? Or do they rejoice without this knowledge? If they can and do know this fact, upon what semblance of reason can we say that they

cannot know when their brethren invoke their prayers? Is not the one fact as easily known to them as the other? The fact is certain that there is joy in heaven over one sinner doing penance. The fact is also certain that the guardian angels spoken of by our Lord "always behold the face of the Father," and that those angels do know when we offend against those little ones placed under their charge. God is able, instantaneously, to reveal to the saints in glory every fact that occurs on earth. Unless we deny the existence of this almighty power, we must concede the entire futility of this objection.

It was objected that this doctrine is inconsistent with the sole mediatorial power of Christ. St. Paul says: "There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." (I Tim. ii, 5.)

A mediator must always be the equal of both the parties between whom he interposes. One sovereign independent state can interpose as a mediator between other sovereign independent states; but individuals, as such, however distinguished, would never be permitted by sovereign states to mediate between them, because not their equals. For this reason it was necessary that Christ should be both God and man, that He might be the Mediator between two of His equals. Whatever is said by a mediator is addressed by him to both the parties, and as the equal and friend of both.

The position of the saint who prays for his brethren, is totally different from that of a mediator. The saint is only the equal of one of the parties, and his prayer is solely addressed to the other. He assumes not the position of a mediator, but that of an inferior petitioner for favors for his own friend and equal.

The charge of idolatry which has often been recklessly made by some Protestant writers, but which has been

abandoned by the more candid Protestant controvertists, is one requiring very little notice.

The Catholic doctrine has been misunderstood, in some instances, by not observing that the word *worship* has several different meanings. In King James' translation it is used in different senses. Thus in Luke xiv, 10, it is used to express the lowest degree of respect. When used by Catholic writers in reference to the honor due to the saints and their relics, it is used in its subordinate sense. Worship, like love, may be given to different objects, in different degrees. When the lawyer asked Christ which was the greatest commandment, He answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." By this our Lord did not mean to exclude all love of others, but only required for God our supreme love; for He immediately adds: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matt. xxii, 35-39.) As God requires our supreme love, so He requires our supreme worship; and as He does not prohibit us from loving others, while we love Him supremely, so He does not inhibit that inferior respect we pay to His saints, while we give to Him and to Him only, the supreme homage of our souls. The two are entirely compatible with each other; and no more conflict than do the powers of a subordinate with those of his superior. And those who confuse the two, and refuse to distinguish between them, and upon that false basis say, that God is injured by this subordinate respect paid to His holy servants, simply because they were such, are about as much mistaken as the man who abandoned his faithful wife, for the sole reason that she loved her mother. He could not see how his wife could love her mother and at the same time love him.

The Blessed Virgin Mary.

“Virgin and mother of our dear Redeemer!
All hearts are touched and softened at her name;
Alike the bandit with the bloody hand,
The priest, the prince, the scholar and the peasant,
The man of deeds, the visionary dreamer,
Pay homage to her as one ever-present . . .
So mild, so merciful, so strong, so good,
So patient, peaceful, loyal, loving, pure,
This were enough to prove it higher and truer
Than all the creeds the world had known before.”

—*Longfellow.*

In the Letters Apostolic, issued by Pope Pius the Ninth, in December, 1854, making a dogmatic definition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and which has given so much satisfaction to the entire Catholic world, it is declared: “that the doctrine which holds that the Blessed Virgin Mary, at the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of the Omnipotent God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, has been revealed by God, and therefore should firmly and constantly be believed by all the faithful.”

The hasty objection that this doctrine did not exist in the Church until it was defined, is thus met by Dr. Bryant, in his late beautiful work upon the Immaculate Conception:

“There be some, who absurdly affirm of any given doctrine, that it did not exist before such and such a period, the date at which it was solemnly defined. The fallacy of such an assertion is sufficiently exposed by the following. The canon of the Sacred Scriptures was not defined until the time of the Council of Hippo in the fourth Century. Therefore, according to these men, the

Sacred Scriptures did not exist until then. Apply this rule to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, and to every other, and words need not be multiplied or wasted in vindication of the Church in every case." (Preface, xiv.)

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is the result which necessarily flows from facts and principles plainly laid down in Scripture. It is but a true judicial extension of those principles.

When our first parents had fallen, the Lord declared that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Eve, by whose act original sin was introduced, was created sinless, and it was fit, in the nature of God's system of redemption, that Mary, the second Eve, should also be created sinless. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb; and Jeremias, the plaintive prophet, was sanctified before he was born. (Luke i; Jer. i, 5.) Whenever God created an agent to accomplish some great purpose, He always bestowed upon the person the necessary grace and power. And these were always duly proportioned to the magnitude of the end to be attained. When, therefore, Infinite Purity was about to be united with the human, and to choose for himself a mother, He would necessarily make a fit habitation for Himself. That He had the power, no one will question. "Who," asks St. Cyril, "hath ever heard of an architect building for himself a house, and yielding the occupancy and possession of it to his prime enemy?" And it has been well said by a learned writer:—

"It is not permitted to other children to select a mother according to their good pleasure; but if this were ever granted to any one, who would choose a slave for his mother, when he might have a queen? Who a

peasant, when he might have a noble? Who an enemy of God, when he might have a friend of God? If, then, the Son of God alone could select a mother, according to His pleasure, it must be considered as certain that He would choose one befitting a God."

St. Bernard expresses the same sentiment when he says: "The Creator of men, to be born of man, must choose such a mother for Himself as He knew to be most fit." And it was well said by an ancient Heathen writer: "Whenever you introduce a God, let Him act like a God." And the eloquent Bryant very appropriately asks: "Could it be otherwise, then, that a pure and holy God would choose other than a pure and holy mother? He knew not sin Himself, and in order to take of her flesh, He must have created her without sin also." (The Immaculate Conception, a Dogma, 63.)

When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, he said: "Hail full of grace," according to the Douay Bible; and "Hail thou that art highly favored," as the translation of King James has it.

There are many instances given in the Old and New Testaments, where angels appeared to men; but this is the only case in which one of those blessed spirits ever saluted a human being in this form. This is a deeply significant fact. When Christ was arrayed in the purple robe, the soldiers said to Him in mockery: "Hail King of the Jews." After the resurrection of our Lord, He saluted the occasion by the expression "All hail." But there is no instance mentioned in Scripture where the form of salutation used by Gabriel was ever employed by a superior when addressing an inferior. When the same angel appeared to Zacharias, he simply called him by his name. The salutation "hail" was a form employed by an inferior when addressing a superior. And this is the

reason why that lowly maid — the humblest of the humble — “was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.” Observe that she was affected by the manner of the salutation. The angel had not then announced the object of his visit. Her perfect humility was shocked, because an angel from heaven had addressed her in that manner.

If, then, the Blessed Virgin was superior to the angel sent to her, is it not certain that she must have been sinless at every period of her existence?

The objection that Mary could not have been sinless in her conception, because the apostle Paul says in Adam all die, is not applicable to her case, for the reason, that she was one of the instruments employed by God in his great plan of redemption — that she was the blessed among women — and her case was an exception to the general rule. It is conceded by all that Christ was perfect man, and by those who believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, that He was also perfect God; and yet it is admitted that He was free from original sin. He could be perfect man without bearing the taint of original transgression. So could Mary, through the grace of God.

It has also been said by some Protestant writers, and is a very common objection to be found in sermons, that our Lord treated His mother harshly, especially at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. (John ii.) Before the truth of such a charge should be believed, it should very plainly appear.

It is true, that such an inference might be drawn from a hasty examination of the language of our Lord on that occasion. But when we observe his general mode of addressing His mother, we can see that it was usual with Him to call her simply, woman. This expression he used when hanging on the Cross. He said to Her, “Woman,

behold thy son." Bloomfield, the distinguished Protestant Commentator, very justly says:

"This word was a form of address which implied nothing of disrespect, and was employed by our Lord on the most affecting of all occasions, and when He especially evinced His exquisite sympathy and tender regard for this very parent. This being the case it is scarcely necessary to advert to the classical authorities which have been produced, from Homer to Dio Cassius, in proof of the above position." (Cited in note to Kendrick's translation.)

The great St. Augustine gives one of the true meanings: "The mother demanded a miracle; but He, in divine operations, does not recognize maternal authority, and says, as it were, thou didst not bring forth my wonder-working power: thou art not the mother of my divinity." "When it is remembered that our Lord was subject to His parents, and that His time had not then arrived, we can see that He had two objects to accomplish by what He said: 1. By the question He asked, He intended to inform His mother that He could not be subject to her in divine things. 2. By the statement, "Mine hour is not yet come," He intended to let her know that He would perform the miracle, even before His time, at her request. The purpose of our Lord was to place Himself right before His mother, so that she would know the true ground upon which He performed the miracle before His time had come. The very fact that she at once said to the servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it," shows conclusively that she understood Him to promise a compliance with her wish. So far from the conduct and language of Christ on this occasion, when taken and considered together, showing

any harsh treatment of His mother, they show precisely the contrary. It would have been very strange that our Lord should have been harsh to His mother."

The expression, "Mother of God," as applied to the Blessed Virgin by Catholic writers, and especially by the ancient Fathers, as will be seen, and as found in Catholic books of Devotion, does not mean what many Protestants may suppose. As we have just seen by the extract of St. Augustine, the Catholic Church does not hold that our Lord derived His divine nature, but only His flesh from His mother. In the Christian theory, the soul of each human being is created by God from nothing, and is united to the body before birth; and yet the mother is said to be the mother of the compound being called man, although he derived but one part of his being from his parents. It is the Catholic faith, that while our Lord did not derive His divinity from his mother, the two natures, human and divine, were united in him before His birth. And this is all that is meant when we say that Mary was the mother of God. It is not intended to convey the idea, by this expression, that God did not exist prior to, and independent of her. He was her Creator — she, His creature.

The ancient Liturgies, being public and established forms of divine worship, constitute satisfactory evidence of the faith of the early Church in regard to the Blessed Virgin.

1. The Liturgy of St. James the Apostle, as it is called, is certainly very ancient, if it was not composed by him. This Liturgy is quoted by St. Cyril, of Jerusalem, A. D. 347. This is the one in most common use among the Orientals. In this the Blessed Virgin is called "Most holy, most glorious, immaculate Mother of God, and ever

Virgin." It also adds the very marked expression, "In every respect out of the range of sinful men."

2. In the Liturgy of St. Mark the Evangelist: "Most holy, immaculate, and blessed Mother of God, and ever Virgin Mary."

3. In that of St. John Chrysostom: "In every part wholly, altogether untainted."

4. In that of St. Basil: "Chiefly with the most holy, spotless, above all blessed, our glorious Lady, Mother of God, and ever Virgin Mary."

5. In the Alexandrian: "But chiefly of our most holy, most glorious, immaculate, most blessed Lady, Mother of God, and ever Virgin Mary."

6. In the Roman Liturgy of undoubted antiquity: "Most glorious, most holy, immaculate Mother of God, and ever Virgin Mary."

In the second century, St. Justin Martyr calls her the Mediatrix between God her Divine Son, and our fallen race; and St. Irenaeus, of the same age, says of her: "If Eve disobeyed God, yet Mary was counselled to obey God; that the Virgin Mary might become the advocate of the Virgin Eve. And as the human race was bound to death through a virgin, it is saved through a virgin; the scales being equally balanced; virginal disobedience by virginal obedience." (*Advers. Haeres.*, lib. v, cap. xix, p. 879.)

In the third century, St. Hippolytus calls her "Holy and Immaculate," and Origen says: "She has not been tainted with the breath of the venomous serpent."

In the fourth age St. Ephraim says: "Mary is immaculate, and most remote from every taint of sin."

I have passed over many of the passages quoted by Dr. Bryant, and must refer to the work itself for the others.

Relics and Images.

In reference to the relics of the saints, the Council of Trent declared:

“That the holy bodies of holy martyrs, and of others now living with Christ, which were the living members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Ghost, by Him to be raised up, and glorified, unto everlasting life, are to be venerated by the faithful, through which many benefits are bestowed on men by God; so that they who affirm that veneration and honor are not due to the relics of the saints, or that such relics and other sacred monuments are uselessly honored by the faithful, and that the places dedicated to their memories are in vain visited for the sake of impetrating their aid — are absolutely to be condemned, as the Church has long since condemned, and now also condemns them.” (Sess. xxv.)

And in reference to the pictures and images of the saints, the same council decreed:

“That the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, and of other saints, are to be had and retained especially in Churches, and that due honor and veneration are to be shown them; not that it is believed that any divinity or virtue is inherent in them, on account of which they are to be worshipped, or that anything is to be asked of them, or that trust is to be placed in images, as of old was done by the Gentiles, who placed their hope in idols; but because the honor which is shown them is referred to the prototypes which they represent; so that through the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads, and fall down, we may adore Christ, and venerate the saints, whose likeness they bear.” (Sess. xxv.)

It is just as natural to respect the relics and images

of those we love, as to love the objects themselves. In fact, the love of the relics and images of the great and good is but the inevitable result of the love we bear the objects to whom these appertain. If the sincere believer loves anything, it must be the sublime system of Christianity itself; and if he loves the cause, he must love those who have done most to advance it. If there be in the mind and heart of the true believer any human object most worthy of his love, it is the holy martyr for the cause of Christ. And after all the frivolous and unfeeling objections that have been, or may yet be urged against an impulse so natural and innocent, the human heart will still tell us that it is just and right in itself. The heart is as often right as the head. The heart of Daniel Webster, in opposition to the doubts of his head, assured him that the glowing sermon of Christ on the Mount was not the production of man; and happy would he have been had he followed this holy impulse of his heart, which was as true as instinct itself. It is useless and vain coldly to argue against the simplest and sweetest impulses of the soul, as if we wished to banish from the heart all sympathy for the good and great.

Is the love of the humble and true Christian for his brethren a sin or a virtue? In that last and most mournful discourse delivered by the meek Saviour, just before His passion, He said to His disciples:

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” And so important did our Lord consider this new commandment, that He repeated it three several times, in the same discourse. Should our love cease the moment the holy brother dies?

If we are bound to love the great and noble champions of the cross, are we not bound to keep this love

ever "green in our souls?" And if so, are we not allowed to use the means best adapted to that end? Strange, if we are not. The honors paid to St. Paul and St. Peter, in their day, we may certainly pay to their memory now. And we may surely use any innocent means in doing this.

Pictures and images of Christ, of Mary, of the apostles, and of the martyrs, are intended simply to excite devotion by bringing up before the mind a more concentrated and lively history of the persons and scenes represented. Prose, poetry, and painting, are only signs or mediums of thought and fact. These different modes of representation have each their peculiar advantages. It is by a combination of them all that the best representation can be had in many cases. For this reason we see works of art and science, as well as of biography, constantly illustrated by drawings, plans, and pictures. By the use of prose a more exact and full description can be given, while that of poetry is more vivid, and that of painting more touching. When we look upon an image or painting of the crucifixion, it at once brings to our recollection, by the power of the association of ideas, all the remembered incidents of our Lord's passion. The word cross is but a sign, and only brings up the same emotions as the image or picture of the same thing represented.

In the Old Testament we are told that the dead man was instantly restored to life when he touched the bones of the prophet. (II Kings xiii, 21.) So, we are assured that miracles were wrought by handkerchiefs and aprons from the body of St. Paul. (Acts xix, 11, 12.) We are also told that the shadow of St. Peter and the hem of our Lord's garment had this effect. (Matt. xix, 20; Acts v, 15.) From these examples we see that God,

of old, did make use of such means to show His power and love, and He certainly may do so now.

That the Catholic doctrine was the universal doctrine of the Church in the very first ages of Christianity, there would seem to be no doubt. The fact is certain, that angels are ministering spirits, as St. Paul says, and that the saints in glory are as the angels, as we are told by Christ; and as the angels are such ministering spirits, it is very strange that they cannot aid us by their prayers, while this assistance can be given us by our brethren on earth. What substantial difference there can be between the principle of the two cases, it is difficult to perceive.

CHAPTER XIV

MISCELLANEOUS CONSIDERATIONS

General misrepresentation of Catholic doctrines.

That fair and candid controvertists may often misconceive each other's meaning, is not surprising. This arises from the general poverty, and uncertain character, of language, and often from a want of certainty and clearness in the statement of a position. Writers, who have confused conceptions of the subject they discuss, or of the positions they lay down, will necessarily use confused language. In quoting from an author, who did not understand distinctly what he intended to state, or who uses inappropriate and loose language, it may be very difficult to avoid the appearance of unfairness. Quotations must have their practical limits; and it is not always easy to know, in every case, where these limits are to be found. So much of an author should be quoted as to show his true position in reference to the single point regarding which quotation is made. If I quote an author for a given purpose, I need only quote so much as that purpose fairly requires. Every writer upon moral and philosophical subjects must have learned the practical difficulty of sometimes apprehending the true meaning of an author, and of representing him correctly. Mistakes of this kind are to be anticipated, to a certain extent. It must also be conceded, that the fairest and most impartial writers are sometimes improperly accused of unfairness.

But after making every fair and just allowance for the general poverty and uncertainty of language, and the natural frailty of the human mind, I am compelled to say, that in all my reading and observation, I have never met with the same amount of gross, bitter, and continued misrepresentation, as I have found on the part of Protestant controvertists, when writing upon the subject of the Catholic faith. That I am correct upon this subject, and in this opinion, can readily be seen by any calm, careful, and diligent reader, who will take the authors on both sides, and fairly compare them together.

So strong is that feeling of violence and prejudice that even in theological dictionaries and other works, whose professed purpose is historically to state the true tenets of different bodies of professed Christians, we can very seldom find anything like a fair statement of the Catholic faith. The only theological dictionary compiled by a Protestant that did give a fair and just statement of the Catholic faith, so far as my examination has gone, was one by an English author, the just and impartial Bellamy. The Oxford Tracts also give generally a fair representation of the particular tenets of the Catholic Church, discussed by them. But the *Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, so confidently quoted by Mr. Campbell as impartial, is one of the most inaccurate works I saw, in all that relates to the Catholic system.

Among the Protestant writers whose works I examined, I found Dr. Spring, in his Dissertation, to whom I have often referred, one of the most extreme. He charges the Catholic Church with a complication of evils enough to ruin any cause, if true. He says, among other things: "Rome cannot endure discussion. The only safety of her wicked system is to keep the world in darkness."

As I read Protestant and Catholic writers together, I soon found this charge denied by the latter. One of the works read by me at the same time I read this dissertation of Dr. Spring's, is the volume containing the Moorfield Lectures of Dr. Wiseman, in the thirteenth lecture of which I found this language, p. 110, vol. 2:

"We are anxious not to shrink from inquiry, but to court it; we throw open our places of worship to all men; we publish our books of prayer and instruction before the world; we submit the least of our children and their catechism to examination; we invite all to inspect our schools and present the masters and their scholars to their interrogation; all that we write and read is at the command of the learned; and, if in our power, we would open our breasts, and ask them to look even into our hearts—for God knows we have nothing to shade, nothing to conceal—and then let them read our belief, as written on its tablets in the simplest and plainest terms. No attack can any longer be allowed by any sensible, reasonable, generous, or liberal-minded man, except through calm and cool investigation, based entirely on the correct statement of our doctrines, and conducted exclusively, not by vague quotations from the word of God, but by arguments clearly and strongly addressed to his understanding."

The first work I read, in the course of my investigations into the truth of the Catholic system, was the debate between Campbell and Purcell. I was a member of the same church with Mr. Campbell and had the utmost confidence in him. All my partialities were in his favor. And yet I must say, I was mortified when I read the debate in question, because of the extreme bitterness of the charges he made, and the manner in which he shifted his positions, and the objectionable character of many of his

main assumptions, inferences, and deductions. The reading of the debate did not make me a Catholic, as I thought I saw grounds of objection not met by Bishop Purcell; but I could not but see that Mr. Campbell had fought with all sorts of weapons, and had addressed too many of his arguments to mere ignorance and prejudice.

For example, he says in reference to the doctrine of Transubstantiation:

“But the priest can bring down the divine Saviour from heaven, and offer him body, soul, and divinity, as often as he pleases, and have the people adore both him and the miracle in his hands!!” (Debate C. & P., 292.)

In this extract it is substantially assumed that, in the contemplation of the Catholic theory, the change in the elements is produced by the miraculous power of the priest, and that the priest is adored as well as the miracle. In all my investigations I could never find such a doctrine. The change is held to be produced by the words of Christ, “This is my body,” in the same way that the words of Christ produce the effect intended when He said, “Thy sins are forgiven thee”—“Be thou clean”—“Thou art loosed from thine infirmity”—“Lazarus, come forth.” The Catholic Church holds that Christ has promised, that when these words are used in the administration of the Eucharist, He Himself, by His own Word, will produce the change. And that any adoration was allowed to the priest, I could never find any proof, because it is false.

A very common mode of misrepresentation among Protestant writers was the assumption of an historical fact contrary to the genuine facts of history. A notable example of this may be found in the late work of Dr. Edward Beecher, “The Papal Controversy Exposed.” I

have not seen the work, and quote only from a review of it:

“The Pilgrim Fathers of New England, and the other Protestant founders of this great nation, came to this continent soon after the Reformation had shaken the European world, to lay the foundation of a new order of things, by erecting a new social system upon the great principles of civil and religious liberty.”

If the Pilgrim Fathers and other Protestant founders, came with the intention to lay the foundation of a new order of things, and did so, embracing both civil and religious liberty, we are at a loss to find any competent historical proof of that fact.

This system of general misrepresentation has been confessed by many of the most candid Protestant writers. Thus the Rev. Mr. Nightingale, in his *Religion of All Nations*, says: “From diligent inquiry it has been ascertained that party spirit and prejudice have thrown the most undeserved obloquy upon the religion and practices of the Roman Catholics; — in scarcely a single instance has a case concerning them been fairly stated, or the channels of history not grossly, not to say wickedly, corrupted.” (Page 65.) “Even the illiberal Mr. Ulix,” says Archbishop Hughes, “says that the Catholic religion is ‘calumniated cruelly.’” “No religious system,” says Nightingale, “is treated so unjustly.” And Hume declares that “Protestants seemed to have thought that no truth should be told of the Papists.” The learned Grotius reproaching the Protestant ministers on this head, received for reply, “that they found it necessary for the public good of the Reformed Religion.” (Letters to Vossius.) And Vossius himself, in the same correspondence, writes, that when he reproved the ministers of

Amsterdam, they admitted the iniquity of the proceeding; "but," added they, "if we leave off such language, our people will soon leave us."

Causes of this system of misrepresentation.

Several questions naturally arise under this state of fact. What causes originally led to this system of general misrepresentation? What causes continue it even to the present day? Is it done with the calm and deliberate intent to create and foster that "contempt prior to examination," which can and will resist any amount of argument and proof whatsoever? Or does it continue from an ignorance of the Catholic doctrine?

That this system of injustice had its origin mainly in a want of integrity, I have no doubt; and that, in many instances, it is still continued from the same motive, I am forced to believe. In most cases its continuance arises from a real ignorance of the Catholic faith and its history, and from such a prior disgust, as prevents a fair examination.

In the beginning and during the progress of what is called the Reformation, many of the most unprincipled men, from a variety of motives, put themselves at the head of that movement. Such men are ever disposed to lead any new commotion that promises them any gratification of their passions.

Alison, the distinguished Protestant historian, in his History of Europe, has this language:

"The great sin of the Reformation was the confiscation of so large a portion of the property of the Church for the aggrandizement of temporal ambition, and the enriching of the nobility, who had taken part in the struggle. When the great convulsion broke out, nearly a third of the whole landed estates, in the countries which it em-

braced, was in the hands of the Roman Catholic Church. What a noble fund was this for the moral and religious instruction of the people, for the promulgation of truth, the healing of sickness, the assuaging of suffering. Had it been kept together, and set apart for such sacred purposes, what incalculable and never-ending blessings would it have conferred upon society. Expanding and increasing with the growth of population, the augmentation of wealth, the swell of pauperism, it would have kept the instruction and fortunes of the poor abreast of the progress and fortunes of society; and prevented, in a great measure, that fatal effect, so well known in Great Britain in subsequent times, of the national church falling behind the wants of the inhabitants, and a mass of civilized heathenism arising in the very heart of a Christian land. Almost all the social evils under which Great Britain is now laboring, may be traced to this fatal, and most iniquitous spoliation, under the mask of religion, of the patrimony of the poor, on the occasion of the Reformation."

And the learned historian may well call this confiscation "THE GREAT SIN"—"This most iniquitous spoliation of the patrimony of the poor, under the mask of religion."

From these great and unquestioned historical facts, two conclusions plainly follow:

1. That they were truly the leaders to whom the plunder was distributed. This is a test, simple and conclusive.

2. That the love of plunder and pure intentions are never found in the same breast at the same time. They are too incompatible to exist together.

It is, then, clear to my mind, that the motives of the leading spirits who did, in fact, control and govern that

movement generally were interested and mercenary. And from this it is also evident that the sincere who participated in it were forced to yield to the bold, the forward, and the unprincipled. We see a noted example of this, in the dispensation granted by Luther, Melancthon, and others, to Philip, the Landgrave of Hesse, to have two wives at once.

These being the characteristics and motives of the leaders of the Reformation, they would necessarily labor to vindicate and sustain themselves; and, in doing so, the *only* question they would ask, would be this: "*How shall we do so the most successfully?*" *Success*, not *right*, would be, with them, the leading impulse. And not only so, but they would naturally make up in bitterness, false accusation, and crafty evasion, what they truly lacked in argument and fact. An act of gross injustice is certain to be vindicated by calumny and slander. The victim must be degraded, to justify the oppressor; and this is but the result of the "despairing necessities of falsehood." It was very natural, therefore, to resort to this system of vindictive and bitter crimination and crafty evasion. The taking of property that did not belong to them, but really had, for ages before, belonged to others, was so plain and palpable a violation of the principles of eternal justice, that nothing could extenuate it, even in appearance, but the utmost delinquency on the part of the plundered victim. And the most vindictive, bitter, and relentless animosity will always be found with those who themselves have grievously wronged others, from mercenary motives.

In this way the "channels of history," as Mr. Nightingale truly says, were originally "*grossly*, not to say *wickedly*, corrupted." Or, in the language of another distinguished writer, (if I can quote from recollection

correctly,) "modern history has been one grand conspiracy against truth." Speaking of Bishop Burnet's History, Dr. Johnson said: "Burnet's History of his own times is very entertaining. The style, indeed, is mere chit-chat. I do not believe that Burnet intentionally lied; but he was so prejudiced, that he took no pains to find out the truth. He was like a man who resolved to regulate his time by a certain watch; but will not inquire whether the watch is right or not." (Boswell.)

This system of misrepresentation created in the minds of the great mass of Protestants that sort of credulity which is the sure and never-failing mark of prejudice, namely: a *predisposition* to believe any and every thing horrible and absurd in the doctrines and practices of religious opponents, upon the mere reiteration of bold assertion. This prejudice extended to all classes; and grew up with the ministers, as well as with the members. The ministers and writers among Protestants have preached and written for this class of hearers and readers generally. And it is a melancholy truth, that those preachers and writers who have been most bitter and uncharitable, have generally been the most popular, and the most honored and patronized. This tribute to prejudice and bitterness has naturally called into prominent activity too many preachers and writers of that reckless character; and those again have reacted upon their readers and hearers.

By such means, and such instruments, prejudice is still kept up; and prejudice is ever unreasonable. It always reverses the rules of logic and reason, and loves a smart sophism much better than a sound argument. In violation of that great rule of law and right reason, as laid down by Starkie, in his treatise on Evidence, that "the more atrocious the nature of the crime is, the more

repugnant it is to the common feelings of human nature, the more *improbable* it is that it has been perpetrated at all," this unfortunate state of mind will believe a charge the more readily, because of its unnatural atrocity and absurdity, and the improbability of its being committed by such *numbers*, and under *such circumstances*. Consequently, when the Tales of Maria Monk were published, they were read and believed with eagerness by too many Protestants, and even by Protestant ministers. Had such a mass of vilification been published against any other body of professed Christians, no one would have believed it. This *eagerness* to hear and believe such stories and calumnies is the sure test of a diseased state of mind. You may take two persons, one impartial, and the other prejudiced, and you may inform them of a charge against the members of an imposing party or Church, imputing very base misconduct, and the impartial man will require proof, clear and strong, in proportion to the enormity of the offence, and will believe it with *regret*, while the dupe of prejudice will *jump* to a conclusion of guilty, with a joy and alacrity in proportion as the offence is grievous, and the evidence doubtful; especially when the charge is of some *secret* crime, that requires a *smart* man to find it out. And I have often remarked, in the course of my reading and observation, that charges of dark, secret, and unnatural crimes are most readily believed by prejudiced persons in every grade of life.

It is this prejudice on the part of too many Protestant writers and readers which prevents them from examining Catholic authorities for Catholic doctrines. They blindly follow others who have gone before them.

But another reason which prevents even just and unprejudiced Protestants from consulting Catholic stand-

ards for Catholic tenets, is the melancholy fact that these misrepresentations of the Catholic system are too often found in the works of Protestant writers of distinguished ability, of great personal purity, and official dignity; as if these eminent men had first carefully built up such a reputation, that they might give the more permanence and force to their misrepresentations. In their eminent stations they had been scrupulously just and gentle to all the world besides; as if reserving all their injustice and bitterness for one single object — the Catholic Church. As examples, I will mention two eminent Bishops of the Church of England, Porteus and Watson, whose extreme and bitter misrepresentations of the Catholic faith were, indeed, surprising. It is not at all strange, when such men make such statements, that they should be implicitly believed.

That this general *continuance* of misrepresenting the Catholic faith, and the history relating to it, is mainly the result of a true ignorance of what they are, is not only shown to be true by the fact that such misrepresentations exist too generally to be the result of a calm and deliberate predetermination, among the majority of Protestant writers of the present day, to commit so grievous a moral wrong, not to say crime; but is very conclusively proven by a circumstance stated by Bishop Hughes, in his letter to Mr. Breckenridge, dated March 25, 1833. (Con. H. & B., 70:)

“Since your allusion to Bishop Kendrick has led me into this episode, I may as well close it with a little incident which occurred to myself last spring, and does not, therefore, depend on ‘information.’ I happened to go into the session-room of the ‘General Assembly,’ and found the ‘Bishop’ engaged in settling a question which I soon discovered to be *interesting*; viz., ‘whether bap-

tism, administered by a Catholic priest, is valid!’ A committee, it seems, had been appointed to draw up a report, which was being read when I entered. The committee had decided in the *negative*, and in support of this decision, reported a variety of reasons, with two of which I was particularly struck. One was that they (Catholic priests) baptize in Latin; as if infants were not quite as well acquainted with *this language* as with any other. The second was, that they (Catholic priests) baptize *with oil*—a discovery reported on the authority of a certain doctor, I think, of Maryland. It was listened to with great but *silent* solemnity—although there were at the moment *five baptismal fonts*, in as many Catholic churches, within half a mile of where the Assembly was sitting; and though it is known to all the world that the Catholic baptism is, and ever has been, with water, I retired from the presence of these ‘Teachers in Israel,’ revolving in my mind the words of our Blessed Redeemer: ‘If in the *green* wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?’”

Another remarkable case occurred in Campbell & Purcell’s Debate. A Catholic priest had been excommunicated in Philadelphia some years before, and some mischievous wag had copied the obscene curses found in Sterne’s “Tristram Shandy,” and had them published in a newspaper as the curses pronounced against the expelled priest. Mr. Campbell was deceived by this trick, and *seriously* read Sterne’s curses, as a grievous charge against the Catholic Church.

I have said that in the beginning and during the progress of the Reformation, many unprincipled men put themselves at the head of that movement; and that such men necessarily adopted that line of self-justification which, in the nature of the case, would be most *suc-*

cessful. And while a greater proportion of the unprincipled men was found among the early writers of the Reformation, it is undoubtedly true, that many of the same character have lived and flourished since, and still live and flourish;

“Without the care of knowing right from wrong,
Always appear decisive, clear, and strong;
Where others toil with philosophic force,
Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course,
Flings at your head conviction in a lump,
And gains remote conclusions at a jump.”

Then, again, there is a large class of Protestants, who, while they will not themselves positively and affirmatively propagate these misrepresentations of the Catholic faith, will still wink at them, and take no care, and make no effort, to prevent or correct the wrong. They are entirely *passive*, while they see the grossest injustice done, and seem to satisfy their consciences, as Pilate did his, when he washed his hands and declared himself innocent of the blood of Christ. But is such conduct just? Is it not the bounden duty of all good men to affirmatively oppose falsehood, and *prevent* injustice, when in their power? Will such morality stand the stern and rigid test of the great Judgment?

Reflections.

This system of misrepresentation of Catholic doctrines, practices, and intentions, so general among Protestant writers, gave rise, in my mind, to very serious questions. Why did *SUCCESS* originally require such a line of argument? Why did *truth* require such a support? Why was such a course preferred in support of an alleged true system? And why is it still necessary? Are bad arguments more effective than good? Is mis-

representation better in a good cause, than candor and truth? If the doctrines really held by Catholics were so false, erroneous, and absurd, did they need exaggeration to cause their rejection? Does the grossest error, or error of any kind, require to be darkened beyond its real demerits, to make it hated and despised? And is it necessary to prepare the human mind for the reception of *truth*, that it should first be filled with falsehood? Do you sow *weeds* before you sow good grain? Is it necessary to inculcate charity, that you should first give a proof of its absence, in the party who inculcates it? And if you wish to put down falsehood, is it necessary, by your own act, to show its *utility and necessity*?

True, it is a practical rule with too many to use falsehood against alleged falsehood, according to the common maxim, that you must oppose the Devil with fire. But is this Christianity? Is it true philosophy? On the contrary, is it not the doctrine of revenge? the practice of savages? the chief maxim of morality among wolves and tigers? And if you wish to vanquish the Evil Spirit and his bad cause, had you not better fight him with something the opposite of that which he uses himself? Had you not better oppose evil with good?

Does not this NECESSITY arise from other causes? Is it because there is a unity, a force, a beauty, in the Catholic system, that renders it logically impregnable? Is it because it is so conformable to the truth of Christianity, JUST AS IT IS, and not as the passions, interests, and pride of men would make it, that the Catholic theory is so much misrepresented and despised? Why is it that every proud innovator upon a permanent system — every wild fanatic — every demagogue in religion — every sect, and the broken fragments of every sect,

from Simon Magus to the present time, have one and all been down upon the Old Church?

It is true, it is an exclusive system. Every *true* system must be so. It is a system of humility, of penance, and of self-mortification and restraint. And these features are exceedingly distasteful to human nature. The Catholic does claim to be the sole true Church; not a mere part and parcel of it. She acts as if she was such. She is as exclusive as truth—as stubborn as fact. She has no compromise to make—none to offer—none to accept. Like an immovable mountain, you must go to her. She adapts not her faith to suit changing circumstances, or the whims of men, or the temper of the times. Her terms are the same to all. If the great Napoleon sins at the head of his victorious legions, he is excommunicated. If the mighty Henry the VIIIth did labor for her, and did great service in her cause, and, therefore, did deserve her thanks; and presuming upon his claims and influence, asks a divorce from his lawful, injured, and innocent wife, his request is peremptorily refused, whatever may be the consequences. She teaches that Christianity cannot be improved—that the Church, being the work of Christ, cannot be reformed. If a man is proud, he cannot go to confession. If he be fond of luxury, the fasts of the Church will appear exceedingly absurd and oppressive. In short, if he enters her confines, he must make great *present* sacrifices. He must merge his individual religious importance in that of the Church, as one whole. And this constitutes the true distinction between the impulses of immediate self-interest and holy love for the *cause*. She also teaches that salvation and glory are found at the *end* of the journey, and not along the path of travel.

And are not these characteristics of the Catholic Church the true cause of that **INEXORABLE NECESSITY** which forces her opponents to fight with any weapons they find most *available*, and, therefore, to resort to this ungenerous system of misrepresentation and abuse? True it is, she does claim *superiority over all others*. And this claim would necessarily wound their pride. From the very nature of this *exclusive* system, it must arouse this peculiar kind of resistance. It stands opposed to too many darling wishes and impulses not to incur this most bitter and unrelenting opposition.

It was so with Christianity in the beginning. "Now the first thing that strikes us," says Dr. Paley, "is, that the religion they carried with them was *exclusive*. It denied without reserve the truth of every article of heathen mythology, the existence of every object of their worship. It accepted no compromise; it admitted no comprehension. It must prevail, if it prevailed at all, by the overthrow of every statue, altar, and temple in the world. It will not easily be credited that a design so bold as this could in any age be attempted to be carried into execution with impunity." (Ev. of Chris.)

While it must be readily confessed that Protestants and Catholics hold more doctrines in common than did the Heathens and Christians in the first ages of Christianity, still the Catholic Church is equally exclusive. She cannot sanction a mixed system of truth and error. She requires the genuine, and refuses the debased coin. She too "accepts no compromises"—she "admits no comprehension." And the fact that Protestants consider themselves Christians, while they are regarded by the Catholic Church as heretics, is, of itself, the more calculated to produce this system of opposition. And this rigid and consistent adherence to her faith—this

intolerance, as it is called, is the ground of great complaint on the part of Protestants. "The faith of Rome," says Dr. Spring, "must be received implicitly, or not at all." (Dissertation 39.) And Dr. Spring is right herein. Her faith must be implicitly received. I believe that is always the case with conscientious truth. If she is the true Church, she is certainly *right* in this. If she is not the true Church, and erroneously claims to be such, she still has the sense to be consistent; she has still one great and indispensable mark of truth.

Protestantism is not exclusive. Its leading principle, from which all others logically and necessarily flow, is studiously adapted to flatter individual pride, and indulge the will. Its soft and flexible gum-elastic character admits of infinite modifications, without any efficient checks, and easily conforms itself to the prevailing sentiment of each succeeding age. Progress and Reform being its leading ends, it never finds rest, so long as the human mind loves novelty, and seeks excitement in change. This flexibility is fully shown by the great and continual shiftings from the doctrines of the early Reformers.

Is it not most wonderfully surprising that the Catholic Church, with all her alleged superstitions, corruptions, errors of faith, absurd doctrines, whimsical practices, and austere observances, with the superadded and accumulated mass of distortion and exaggeration of these alleged evils, still cannot be put down — cannot be confuted — and will maintain her pre-eminence in the Christian world? There is something most marvellous in all this. God must have concerned Himself in this matter. And as Blanco White says:

"If the mass of Christians must submit to the decision of another authority, by whatever name it may be called,

the Church of Rome can fear no rival. You may raise doubts against its supremacy. But how very few minds of a pious character will not be overpowered by the pre-eminence of Rome in the Christian world?" (Cited in Fletcher's Notes to Fenelon's Letter on the Use of the Bible.)

And Mr. White, though a decided Protestant, might well say what he did. True, you may "raise doubts" against any thing. You may raise doubts against Christianity. The Christian religion is not so plain as to be wholly free from doubt in unwilling minds. I cannot conceive what merit there could be in *faith*, what room there would be left for the fair exercise of humility, if the proofs of Christianity were so overwhelming as to demonstrate its truth to all men. There is ample proof to satisfy the honest, patient, and diligent inquirer, while there is enough of doubt to perplex the proud and suspicious—the dishonest and the selfish—the thoughtless and the negligent.

After all the bitterness with which she has been assailed; and after all the cavils and objections that human wit, sharpened by interested animosity, or habitual prejudice, has been able to raise, or may be yet able to raise, who would not, *at last*, rather die in the communion of this old calumniated, suffering, and yet invincible Church? Old House of God, I love thee! And the reason why, I have told, and will tell.

How did these alleged errors get into the Church, and when?

One of the most deep and serious questions that arose in my mind was this: How and when did these alleged absurd, unscriptural, and disgusting errors get into the Church?

In my investigations I began at the beginning, and considered the Church as it came from the hands of the apostles. By the consent of all parties, the apostles did their duty, and taught all the truth, and no more. They left the Church in the hands, and under the government, of those officers they themselves had personally instructed and appointed. That they generally made good and worthy appointments, I had no doubt. That those they appointed were properly instructed, I could not question. The Church left by them needed no improvement. She was spread over the entire Roman Empire; and numerous Churches existed as branches of THE CHURCH, in all of which the faith, once delivered, had been carefully taught and deposited. It was in the best days of Roman literature, when those arts best calculated, in their nature, to develop the reasoning faculties, were most fully cultivated, and most generally diffused. And this state of things continued until the destruction of the Roman Empire in the West, by the Goths, Vandals, and other barbarous hordes in the fifth century. The first three centuries were days of general persecution, with intervals of rest; while in the fourth, the Church was alternately protected and oppressed by the Roman Emperors; and in the fifth, her sufferings were extreme. It was in those suffering ages that the "seed took root amongst the stones and thorns, and sprang beneath the axe, and blossomed in the blast"—it was then that "the Circus flowed with blood, but the immortal Spirit walked the red surge and foam, and led the sinking to eternal rest"—and it was then that twelve millions of martyrs laid down their lives,

"And lift their raptured looks on high,
As though it were a joy to die"

for the sublime faith of Christ. In short, the Church arose, and continued for the first five centuries, in an enlightened country, came well instructed, widely diffused, and yet perfectly united, from the hands of the apostles.

Now to prove the fact that these observances, and this organization began at the time and place mentioned, we will assume that they were organized and instituted at some time and place, for the association is now in being, and these ordinances are now observed. The organization of this body, and the institution of those observances, are plain matters of historical fact, and can be known; and whenever they did take place, the fact must have been known, from the very nature of the case. Can any one show that this organization, and the institution of these visible observances, were commenced at any *other* time? If they originated at one time, and the book stated they originated at another and a different time, then there would be a positive contradiction, and the falsehood must be known. Suppose this association did not exist, and the observances were not instituted by the persons, and at the time and place stated, and the book should have been forged at a *later* date, still stating the *pre-existence* of those alleged *notorious visible facts*, would not all men at once say? "This book is false upon the face of it; for it states as *past events*, things that no one ever heard of, and all our own experience is in direct and palpable conflict with the alleged facts recorded in this book. This whole thing is *new*, and not *old*, as stated; and, therefore, must be false. Where is the body of men that ever did keep these observances? Who has heard of them before? Who has ever heard of this book before? These alleged facts were of such a character as to attract the earnest atten-

tion of all men. Who can believe that they could have existed, as alleged, and no one know it?"

It is evidently true, that the bare *success* of a religion, without regard to the *character* of the proofs upon which it *assumes* to rest, or the means used to attain this success, or the circumstances attending the propagation of the theory, is no evidence of the entire truth of the system itself. All religions have prevailed to a greater or less extent; and the truth is undeniable, that they assume to rest upon *different* grounds, appeal to different classes of proof, were propagated by different means, and under different circumstances; while they all agree in *some* great leading features. These facts, when justly considered, would seem to lead clearly to these conclusions:

1. That man, by a law of his own nature, impressed upon him by the Creator, is a religious being. From this law he knows that he is a subordinate being — that there exists a Supreme Intelligent Cause — and that the natural relation existing between the Creating, and the created, Intelligence, entitles the former to the adoration and obedience of the latter. This knowledge of his duty, derived from this law of his nature, though limited as it is, is still sufficient to put him upon *inquiry*, and makes the duty of further inquiry, obligatory. It is a well-known principle of law, applicable to certain classes of cases, that when a party is entitled to notice of certain facts, and has not notice of them in full, but has sufficient notice to put him upon inquiry, by a reasonable use of which he may know all the facts he has a right to know in reference to the alleged matter, then the law presumes full notice, and treats the party accordingly.

2. That man, without a special revelation, could never know his full duty, and his true destination.

If, then, a system of religion should be proposed, embracing the first great truth above stated, it will necessarily attract the attention of men, and lead to investigation. If the theory *assume* to be only based upon reasoning, or *secret* miracles, the efficient *means* of contradiction are not given by the *theory itself*; and where one exists, or another is proposed, at the same time, the choice must rest between bald, desolate Atheism, or cold, vague Deism, on the one hand, and the system already existing, or the one proposed, on the other. As man cannot, without a direct revelation, arrive at all the features of the true religion, he is compelled, from the nature of the case, *to take the best offered, or reject all*. And as it must be a very bad religion, that is not better than infidelity, and that contains less of truth in it, the natural religion of the human heart and mind will generally take the lesser evil of the two.

But, on the contrary, if a *new* religion, or any material *change* of a received religion, be proposed, and such religion or change be based upon visible miracles, or upon any *other* simple and easily understood basis, the natural law of consistency will induce all to compare the system or change proposed with the grounds *assumed* for it to rest upon. *The means of detection are given in both cases alike, and will be used in both*. If, therefore, the grounds, *as given*, be false, or the thing proposed be inconsistent therewith, it must, and will, in most cases, be rejected. The human mind loves consistency; this love is one of its simplest impulses; and when referred for proof to that which is either plainly false or clearly inconsistent with the theory to be established, will uniformly turn away, and seek truth in some other quarter, unless some other very powerful and tempting motive overrule this natural result.

From the admissions of all parties — from the language of the Scriptures, and the testimony of the Fathers, *the faith once delivered was to remain unchanged to the end of time*. And no sentiment is more often and continuously reiterated and affirmed than this: that nothing *new* was to be *added*, and nothing taken away.

The Church, as it came from the hands of the apostles, was firmly grounded in this very plain and important fundamental position, and not only grounded in the position itself, but each member did know what was taught — what were his recognized and established rights — what observances were in the Church and uniformly kept by all — and what doctrines, ordinances, and practices, were CLAIMED as coming from the apostles. And with this plain and obvious rule in the mouths of all the *teachers*, and of all the *lay members*, and with this knowledge in the memories and minds of all, what a strange unaccountable falsehood it was, in the face of this plain principle, and of these simple and known facts, to assert and insist that these *new*, absurd, glaring, and unscriptural tenets, and oppressive ordinances, had always existed in the Church — had come down from the apostles — were *old*, and not *new* — if it be true, as Protestants contend, that these daring innovations upon an admitted unchangeable faith, were introduced into the Church by fraud, covin, and deceit. And if these alleged errors were introduced into the true Church, in their true garb, *as new*, how perfectly inconsistent they were with the known faith, and the plain established rule!

That these alleged errors were of a character to arrest the immediate attention of all, and to give the most serious shocks to the entire system, is clear, not only from their own nature, but from the strong and violent denunciations they receive from Protestants themselves.

If errors at all, they were certainly great and important. They made a change in the system, as palpable and important, as can well be conceived: a change that made as great a difference between the old and the new theory, as is the difference between *fallibility* and *infallibility* in the Church. And the alleged change was not only manifest and plain, but the means of detection, confutation, and resistance, were known to, and within the reach of, all the members.

Under the Protestant view, this well-instructed, widely-diffused, and united suffering Church, went with rapid strides from the pure faith once delivered, into the most grievous errors; and by the absurd change, involved herself in still more intense suffering and disgrace.

And why did she do so? What unaccountable delusion could so deceive her? The same reasons existed then against these errors, if errors at all, as exist now. The same permanent code of law then existed as now, and the same objections would have been urged. The Christians of those days had the same impulses of human nature, and must have entertained the same opposition to injury and oppression. Until the alleged errors were introduced into the church, she was pure and untainted. She must have been aware of this state of the case. All preceding ages were with her in sentiment from the beginning. The *precedents* of all the past sustained her. They were for, and not against her. How, then, could a plain and grievous innovation in faith or observances be introduced, and her teachers not know it? To condemn such an error, or such a practice, it was only necessary to recur to their memories. Their past and present experience—the simple testimony of recollection—was sufficient at once to mark the error. If *new*, it was *false*. And this act of memory was a

test in possession of all. It was simple and certain. Even a child can remember; and the most simple-minded individual can know what he has seen and heard all his life. A man can also know whether he *believes* a certain doctrine. He may not be certain that the doctrine is true; but among the simple matters of fact which he can know, is the fact whether he *believes it to be true*.

It is upon this plain testimony of memory and experience, that Leslie's argument in answer to the charge, that the Scriptures were forged in ages *after* the rites were said to have been instituted, is based. And he insists, with unanswerable power, that the fabricators of this alleged forgery could never have made the Jews "believe, *in spite of their invariable experience to the contrary*, that they had received these books long before from their fathers, had been taught them when they were children, and had taught them to their own children."

And is not this line of argument equally applicable to the case in hand? In the case of the Jews, the difficulty was to convince them, *contrary* to their positive experience, and the simple testimony of their memories, that they had long possessed a book, claiming to be ancient, but, in fact, then for the first time introduced, and had long actually believed and practised the doctrines, and kept the observance therein mentioned. And in the case of the alleged Catholic errors, the insuperable difficulty was, to make the Christians believe that *they had always held doctrines then first promulgated and never heard of before, and had always kept observances that no one in the Church had ever seen performed*. In such a case, the gray-haired and venerable members of the Church, in every part of the world, would have risen up as one man, and said: "We have been members of the Church for many years — we never heard of such a doc-

trine — we never witnessed such a practice. *It is new, inconsistent, and false.*"

For the sake of illustration we will take the doctrine and practice of Confession. It is a *doctrine* not flattering to human pride — not palatable to human nature. The *practice* is equally repugnant to that "something in human nature" referred to by Mr. Campbell; and this practice is remarkably plain, and easily understood and remembered. How, then, were the Christians persuaded to submit to both the doctrine and practice of that which was not only false in itself, but contrary to the universal and fundamental rule to reject all innovations upon the known and established faith? How were they made to believe, contrary to their invariable experience, that these things had always been in the Church? How was human nature so completely overcome? That which shocked all common sense — falsified all experience, and yet claimed to be old and familiar — that which was new, repugnant, arrogant, oppressive and disgusting, was palmed upon the universal Church without difficulty or resistance! How could this be possible? If this could have been done, what could not have been done? Can we fix any limits at all to human imposition, or to human credulity? You might as well attempt to establish a religion assuming to found itself upon visible miracles, when, in fact, there were no miracles, as to hope to introduce *new* doctrines and observances *as old and well known*. In both cases the thing proposed is wholly inconsistent with the recognized basis upon which it assumes to rest, and in direct contradiction to the plainest tests of truth — the evidence of all our senses in the one case, and of our memory and positive experience in the other.

There was another weighty reflection that forced itself

upon my mind, which was this: That these alleged errors were *additions* to the faith, not *subtractions* from it. In the view of Protestants the following tenets are held to be pure ADDITIONS to the faith once delivered; namely: The Infallibility of the Church, The Primacy of St. Peter, The Sacraments of Confirmation, Penance, Matrimony, Extreme Unction, and Holy Orders, and the doctrines of Traditions, Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, Prayers for the Dead, and the continuance of miracles in the Church. And in the view of those who reject Infant Baptism, and baptism by pouring or sprinkling, these were also pure additions. In reference to one or two of the sacraments mentioned above, a portion of the Protestant world agreed with the Catholic Church. This list of alleged errors is certainly very formidable; and the crimes therein stated are grievous enough, and their alleged introduction sufficiently inconsistent in a Church always, at all times, and in all places CLAIMING *only* to teach that which had always been received in one unbroken and continuous line of succession from the apostles. Such a mighty mass of imposition, if imposition at all, is entirely, *under the existing circumstances*, without any parallel in human history.

“In the moral, as in the natural world, it is change that requires a cause. Men are easily fortified in their old opinions, driven from them with great difficulty.” So says Dr. Paley in his *Evidences of Christianity*. And the learned divine might have well added, that this change is still the more difficult when produced by additions, than when the effect of mere negligence. *Affirmative* change is the more difficult. And when this affirmative change is inconsistent with the plain and well-understood basis upon which the system itself assumes

to rest, and when it is *against*, not only the old opinions and received maxims of individuals, but also their interests, and their acknowledged rights, then, indeed, the difficulty becomes insurmountable. If you ask a person to rise earlier and do more work in the day than he has been accustomed to, you will be apt to incur very strong opposition, and very forcible reasons will be required to produce the change. But, on the contrary, if you require *less*, you will scarcely offend him. He will most readily sleep later, and do less work.

And if the Church could make any change in the faith, I should always expect to find it in the negligent loss of some mystery above reason, or of some humiliating doctrine and practice. *It certainly is the impulse of human nature, to get to heaven with as little sacrifice as possible.* Whatever is above reason, or apparently repugnant to it, and whatever is painful to our pride, or asks a sacrifice of any kind, would be most apt to be lost by either a corrupt or negligent Church. To omit a doctrine or practice, requires no *affirmative* act. It requires nothing but *inaction*. Negligence will bring this about.

When we look to the history of ancient heresy, we shall find that it *generally* consisted in denials and rejections of received doctrines. Hymenæus and Alexander denied all future resurrection. The heretics mentioned by St. Ignatius, denied the reality of Christ's body. The Arians denied His divinity. The Novatians denied the efficacy of repentance. The Manichæans forbid marriage, and prohibited meats, and denied the supremacy of the one God.

When we look into the principal tenets of the Reformers, we shall still find the same general characteristic. Their alleged Reformation consisted in *denials*

and *rejections* of received doctrines and observances.

The most insuperable difficulty with me, was to understand how a Church, so well instructed — so well grounded in the true faith — always acting upon the plain principle that no *additions* could be made to the faith, and *nothing lost* — a Church so vigilant that nothing was, *in fact*, lost — could be so far deluded and deceived, as not only to surrender her rights, her faith, and her integrity, but to do so *with such an entire and easy unanimity as to cause no dissensions in the Church*.

That the Church was vigilant to guard the deposit of faith, is not only shown by the conclusive fact that she lost none originally given, but it is shown by the history of the Church itself. The works of the Fathers are full of proofs of this vigilance. We have the most full and minute lists of heretics, including even the most obscure sects; and yet we never hear of any divisions caused by the introduction of this great mass of alleged error. The very animated discussions in the Church, at an early day, as to the time of celebrating Easter, shows her care and anxiety to preserve unity, even in matters of discipline. The time when each heresy arose, by whom it was introduced, and its distinctive characteristics, are all given. And what is still more remarkable is the fact, that these sects agreed with the Catholic Church in most of the doctrines condemned by Protestants, and separated from the Church upon grounds conceded by Protestants to have been erroneous.

That the Catholic doctrines were held by the universal Church of the first five centuries, and were not in general denied even by those heretics, whose doctrines Protestants themselves cannot stand, (except as to the Rule of Faith,) would seem to be clear beyond all reasonable doubt. Even those who would deny the

justice of this conclusion, must still concede the unquestioned fact, that these Catholic doctrines, now disputed by Protestants, were held and maintained by the greatest and most widely-known Fathers and martyrs of those days, as well as by the councils of the Church. Why, then, were there no discussions, no divisions, no denials by others, if those doctrines were new, disgusting, revolting and false? We know that Origen and others put forth certain opinions of their own, upon a few points, and these were promptly resisted, and put down. Why was this vigilance not exercised in resisting the introduction of the alleged Catholic errors?

To introduce these alleged errors at once, was surely impossible; and to introduce them gradually, without producing intense commotions and divisions, would seem equally incredible. Dr. Priestly did contend that the Divinity of Christ, never dreamed of, as he supposed, in the days of the apostles, crept in as an opinion a short time afterwards, waxed strong, until it was finally enacted into an article of faith in the Council of Nice A. D. 325.

How this process could be so silent as to entirely escape detection and, at the same time, so efficient as to introduce successfully such alleged errors, I could not perceive. How the change could be so gradual as not only to escape notice, while going on, but also to be unknown and unfelt after it was accomplished, I could not tell. Can you cut a man's arm off so gradually that he will not feel it? Can you do this so imperceptibly that he will not know, *after it is done*, that he has lost an arm? And can you make him believe that he never had but one?

As to introducing them first in the shape of *opinions*, and then afterwards adopting them as articles of faith, I

could not well understand how this could be; especially in reference to those tenets *contradictory* of the existing faith. For example, I could not understand how the Church, holding, as an article of faith, that Christ was not God, could tolerate even the *opinion* that He was God. Certainly, if I am required to believe in the absence of all divinity in Christ, I cannot be allowed to hold the precise opposite, even as an opinion. If it be the established faith that Christ is not present in the Eucharist, I cannot see by what semblance of reason the Church would permit any member to believe the contrary. In short, I cannot form any conception of that theory which would require members to hold a certain doctrine as an article of faith, and, at the same time, permit them to hold its opposite as an opinion. Nor can I understand how the human mind could contain these opposites, and believe them both, at the same time. I can well understand how, in reference to matters of discipline and speculative opinions, the Church allows her children to hold *either* side of the question, *as matter of opinion*; but I cannot understand how she could *require* her members to believe one thing as a matter of faith, and, at the same time, allow them to disbelieve it.

And it would certainly be most surprising, that the introduction of these alleged errors, even in the shape of opinions, created no dissension or discussion in the Church; and still more surprising, that when they were changed from that shape, all were required to believe, as faith, what before all had been required to disbelieve as heresy; and yet this state of case produce no discussions and no divisions.

I could have no confidence in the solidity of this attempted explanation. It was too weak and doubtful to rely upon. A Church starting right, and upon the

basis of an *unchangeable faith*, and remaining so vigilant as to forget nothing, could not possibly be thus entrapped and deceived. If a few ministers had attempted to introduce them at any time, all the other clergy and all the lay members would have opposed them, and they would have been either put down, or the introducers expelled from the Church. There could never have happened such a universal and wholesale apostasy, so silently and smoothly accomplished, that no one opposed it, and no divisions followed. So long as one single honest and vigilant bishop, priest, or layman remained anywhere in the Church, these alleged errors would have encountered his stern opposition; and his opposition would have aroused that of others. The Church would have felt and recorded the shock. Such a mighty mass of error would have left certain and clear evidences of its introduction and effects. The march of a mighty army through a cultivated country leaves visible desolation behind. The travel of a monster along a dusty road, or through a swamp, will leave a visible track. In both cases the trail is plain, and it can be easily followed. And the introduction of great and grievous errors into such a Church, would always arouse opposition, too strong to be ever overlooked or forgotten.

Another reflection arose in my mind as to the state of case supposed by Protestants. The Church is conceded to have started right. She then held the true faith, no more, no less, in her widely-extended but united communion. The Apostle John had scarcely been in his grave before the very men appointed by the apostles, even the holy martyrs for the faith, those valiant and devoted souls who faced a heathen world, bearing the cross to the nations, and sealing their ministry, like the apostles, with their voluntary blood, are supposed to have been

led away by this most strange and unaccountable delusion. And while the Church was proclaiming everywhere "*nothing new*," she was introducing these alleged errors; and then, after accomplishing the ruin of the faith and her own, like a sinking ship, she settled down — gave up all this fell spirit of innovation and insisted that her faith was *unchangeable*, as she had always done. It is one of the peculiarly aggravating circumstances in her case, that she boldly and continually asserted that her faith was fixed and unchangeable, while in the very act of changing it in the most palpable and glaring respects; and having hypocritically accomplished this, she, with wicked inconsistency, sanctified and fixed these alleged changes permanently in the Church, upon the very same ground of immutability. And not only so, but while in the very act of making these alleged additions to the faith, she was herself claiming an infallibility never heard of before, and, at the very time, giving to all the most conclusive proofs that she did not possess it. She was guilty, according to the Protestant theory, of the gross inconsistency of declaring, with one and the same breath, that her creed was unchangeable — that she must change it — and that she was infallible in making changes in a fixed and immutable system.

And notwithstanding her alleged monstrous errors, her palpable innovations, and her grossly inconsistent conduct, she has succeeded in keeping in her communion the overwhelming majority of all professed Christians in all ages since she began; and so effectually has she covered up these alleged errors, and concealed the existence of the supposed true Church, in past ages, that the finger of time points not to them, and the page of history is silent. And not only so, but she has succeeded in making all her children, numerous as they are, and have ever

been, and widely dispersed, believe in her alleged pretence of infallibility, and love and adhere to her in proportion as she is supposed, by her enemies, to have been wicked, inconsistent, and oppressive. And so intense is this love and this reverence, that when her alleged errors are depicted in the vehement and glowing colors of supposed light and truth, and her assumed delinquencies are portrayed in strains of vindictive denunciation, her deluded children love her the more, and cleave to her as the friends of old Paul did to him, only the more closely for these things. For by some awful and mysterious influence — by some subtle logic — she binds her children with cords too attenuated to be perceived, and too strong to be broken.

The Unity and Sufferings of the Old Church.

It has been said that the continued unity of the Catholic Church constitutes but a flimsy argument in her favor. The idea intended to be conveyed by this objection is, that the professors of other religions, Mohammedan and Heathen, have continued united in their false theories; and that, therefore, continued unity is no argument to prove the truth of any religion.

This objection, at first view, would seem to be very plausible. But conceding, for the sake of the argument only, that this unity has continued to exist among the professors of other religions, as well as among Catholics, and to the same extent; what, then, are the true and legitimate deductions from such conceded premises? I apprehend that these results must follow:

1. That, in the matter of *religion*, men are so deeply and vitally concerned, that among the great mass of its professors, the faith *once* delivered, is always preserved, and safely transmitted from generation to generation.

And that, for example, the Mohammedanism of to-day, is the Mohammedanism of the beginning. It proves the safe *transmission* of religion, even though false, as it was in its *original state*.

2. That the unity of the great body of professed Christians in the Catholic Church proves, in the same way, the safe transmission of the religion of Jesus, as it was by Him delivered; and, by consequence, is a most powerful argument to prove her to be in the right. For whether a system of religion be true or false in its *origin*, the fact that the great mass of its professors have, for a long course of ages, continued united in the same faith, is a very strong proof of their vigilance, sincerity, and consistency; and these qualities will be found in those who do safely transmit a religious theory, purporting to be *permanent* in its *original form*; while these qualities will not always be found in those who seek to vary or change such a system.

It seemed to me that unity was one of the leading duties of Christians. That it was not only an evidence, for that reason, to show which is the true Church; but that it was a powerful argument, even with Infidels themselves. Our Lord certainly so considered it, when He prayed so fervently for the union of His followers, "that the world might believe that the Father had sent Him." So did St. Paul and St. Peter, when so earnestly warning their brethren against heresies and divisions.

As unity is an attribute of the true Church, and one of the leading duties of Christians, were an intelligent stranger seeking for the true Church, would he expect to find it among those who do not possess this attribute, and have not done their duty in this great and essential respect? Would he expect to find a *discordant true Church*? or a *changeable* true Church? In his examina-

tion, I suppose, he would begin at the beginning, and first examine the fundamental rule of each party; and if he found that one party, under its fundamental rule, was full of discords and variations, his common sense would tell him there was something radically wrong there. And he would naturally say to himself: "One of two things is true; either Christianity has changed, or the true Church is not here." But were he to examine the other rule, and find that all who adhere to it do possess this unity, and at all times have possessed it, he would as naturally say: "One of two conclusions is true; either this is the true Church, or the promises of Christ have failed. For the true Church must always profess the *true*, and, therefore, the *same* faith, and possess this *same* unity."

The state of unity assumed, in reference to the professors of false religions, is not borne out by the facts of history. The Mohammedans have long been divided into at least two parties. Mohammed was not a very competent legislator, and left his system very imperfect in some respects.

So that the truth of history, as I understand it, is substantially this: there has been a greater unity in the Catholic Church than in the Mohammedan, or any other, so far as we have the means of knowing; while at the same time those divisions have not been so great as the alleged divisions and errors in the Catholic Church. In other words, the alleged inconsistent changes in the faith of the Catholic Church have been greater than those actually introduced into any of the anti-Christian Churches of the world.

We may take either view of the historical fact, and the argument from the continued unity of the Catholic Church, is, indeed, a very powerful one. If it be true,

that one large portion of mankind united in the profession of one religion, and another large portion in the profession of a different theory, for many ages together; then it does show, that when a system is *once established*, which purports upon its face to be *permanent* in the same form, and to continue without addition or subtraction, it cannot be changed by a wholesale addition of the most disgusting, oppressive, and inconsistent errors, without incurring the most strenuous resistance, and without leaving the most palpable historical evidences of the struggle behind.

Macaulay, the brilliant English Protestant historian, has a well-known passage, in which he speaks of the wonderful sagacity of Rome, and concludes that she is the masterpiece of human wisdom. That she is a masterpiece of wisdom, there can be no doubt; and the only question is whether it is human or divine. If human, it is the most wonderful of all human institutions. But whether human or divine, that wisdom is just what we should expect to find in the work of Christ. We should naturally expect the same unity, consistency, and durability, in any true system. And where we do not find all these qualities, we may safely conclude that the true Church is not there.

The very admission of the attribute of reformability in a Church, makes reforms interminable. For how can truth be reformable? And how can the true Church be reformable? It would seem clear that no Church that ever did change her faith, or that admits it to be reformable at all, can be the true Church of Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Upon the supposition that the Catholic Church is not the true Church, how can we account for the fact that she has withstood all the storms of time, while of the

numerous sects that arose before the Reformation, so few traces remain? If she was false as well as they, why did she not share their fate? How did she happen to possess so much unity, so much wisdom, and so much tenacity of life, while they, numerous as they were, vanished, one after another from the map of existence? Why could none of them possess the human wisdom mentioned by Macaulay?

It is very true that the Old Church during the long course of her career, has had her enemies and trials, without and within. These enemies have been numerous and powerful, and the trials severe. History tells many a sad tale of her sufferings. It was so in the beginning. Judas betrayed his Master, Peter denied Him, and the rest forsook Him and fled, and He was crucified and buried. The religion of Jesus, the despised Nazarene, was, to all human appearances, exterminated. Even the apostles lost faith for the moment. The Jews thought they had made sure work of it. They sealed the sepulchre, and put a guard over it to prevent even the pretence of a resurrection. But Christ would, and did, rise again.

And so it has ever been with His Old Church. Her entire destruction has often been threatened, but it has not yet been accomplished. The thing seems impossible. Her grave has often been dug, in imagination, and her enemies have so often supposed that she was dead and buried; but still she would *rise again*. At the very moment when she was thought to be the weakest, she was, in fact, the strongest. Wonderful vitality! Glorious invincibility! Her enemies could die. She could not.

And since the alleged Reformation, her destruction has been often *threatened*, but only threatened. It is always in the power of her enemies to threaten. A few years after the dawn of that event, the Turks made

renewed and mighty efforts to conquer Europe; and Luther, at the time, advised his followers to refrain from opposing the Turks, until the Papacy should be destroyed. Under these circumstances, every thing seemed suspended upon the fate of one battle. The great battle of Lepanto was fought between the Mohammedans and Catholics, and the Turks were vanquished. When the followers of Luther, under the Landgrave of Hesse, rebelled against the government of Charles the 5, the battle of the Elbe declared in favor of the Emperor. Afterwards the great Gustavus, that thunderbolt of war, whose career threatened the entire destruction of the Catholic Church, was slain at the battle of Lutzen, and the Church again triumphed. Still later, and during the French Revolution, it was thought the days of the Church were numbered, and the notes of triumph were already sounded. But Napoleon appeared, and the Church rose again. And when this great man oppressed the Church, others put him down. And so it has ever been in the history of this Old, but invincible Church. Difficulty after difficulty — trial after trial — she has always met and overcome.

And these stern and gloomy trials — but glorious triumphs — only increase our faith in the stability of this mighty Old Church. Is there any virtue without temptation? Any fidelity without a trial? Any victory, without a struggle? Must not the true Church fight, if she would reign? And if she fights, must she not bleed? And if she expects to gain *great* victories, let her trials be severe. So much the better. Let her “come up through great tribulation,” *but let her come up*. She has always done it.

These trials — these threatened exterminations — give Catholics no uneasiness. They have faith — unwavering

faith — in the promises of Christ. If the Church be not protected by Christ, let her fail. And if she had not been so protected, she would have failed long ago. If the work of Christ, she must and will live on, though her trials and sufferings be still more severe.

And I confess that I love a Church that has overcome all these trials. Her sufferings have been intense. So they should be. Shall the true Church have a primrose path on *earth*, and also a golden path in *heaven*? Will not her glory be in proportion to her sufferings and trials? And her victories in the past but assure me of her victories in the future. The good ship that has triumphantly rode out many a severe storm, and is yet staunch and tight, is the more to be trusted. The veteran soldier that has fought on many a battle-field, and wears honorable scars, and is yet strong and vigorous, is but the more reliable. And the Church expects trials, and would not escape them if she did not expect them. It is her vocation, her business, to meet and overcome them. Let her fulfil her duty — the very purpose of her creation.

Conclusion.

In his debate with Mr. Rice, Mr. Campbell says:

“Catholic parents do their work more faithfully than most of the Protestants, and the consequence is, it is generally more difficult to convert a Romanist to any Protestant profession, than a Protestant to the Roman persuasion.” (Debate 317.)

If it be true, as stated, that “Catholic parents do their work more faithfully, than most of the Protestants,” it does show their greater sincerity, faith, and devotion. And these are most commendable traits in the Christian character. The exertions of a parent to instruct his

children in the religion he himself believes, will bear a just proportion to the fixedness and importance of his own faith.

But the greater difficulty of converting a Catholic than a Protestant, does not arise solely, nor mainly, from the cause assigned by Mr. Campbell, but from others. The great Dr. Johnson said:

“A man who is converted from Protestantism to Popery may be sincere; he parts with nothing; he is only superadding to what he already had. But a convert from Popery to Protestantism gives up so much of what he has held as sacred as any thing that he retains; there is so much *laceration of mind* in such a conversion, that it can hardly be sincere and lasting.” (Boswell, A. D. 1769.) And the biographer himself adds: “The truth of this reflection may be confirmed by many and eminent instances, some of which will occur to most of my readers.”

There certainly is a great deal of truth, though not the whole truth, in this reflection. The convert from the Catholic Church seems conscious that he is embracing an inferior and lower grade of faith, and adopting a colder and more suspicious estimate of human veracity. He cuts himself loose from the holy ties that bound him to the suffering martyr-Church of old. He severs all connection with the apostles, except that *hidden* one, which is supposed to be buried in the darkness and silence of the dim distant ages of the past. He leaves the sweet communion of saints, which combines the children of the true faith everywhere, in every age, in one holy brotherhood. What are the heroic martyrs and saints of old to him? They are now become “mystics and visionaries.” What to him is now the great and universal Church of the mighty past? “The Man of Sin.” Who

were the clergy of the Old Church — that Church which won the world to Christianity? To him they are now become impostors, who betrayed the faith of Christ. And the laity, who were they? Simple dupes. In short, to him what is the Christian past? A blurred and blotted page for evil, and a practical blank for good. It is a melancholy view of Christianity — a humiliating estimate of human veracity — a mighty accusation against humanity itself. No wonder it produces so much "*laceration of mind.*"

But it is not so with the convert to the Catholic Faith. He is conscious that he has embraced a higher grade of faith, has been brought into closer and holier communion with the unseen world, and has adopted a more just and charitable estimate of human veracity. He has taken a step towards the Celestial City, from the low murky valleys of discord, where the fogs of error do love to dwell. He shakes hands with the brethren of every kindred, name, and tongue. He worships with the people of every nation. He joins his prayers with those who speak the varied languages of earth. On every shore, in every land, beneath every sky, and in every city, he meets his brethren of the universal Church. He is at home everywhere, and bows down with the millions who have worshipped, and still worship, at the same altar, and hold the same faith.

But not only so. He looks back over the pages of past history, and ascends by a plain, visible, and unbroken chain to the apostolic day. He has no chasms to leap, no deserts to cross. At every step in this progress he finds the same Old Church — the same faith — the same worship still pre-eminent in the Christian world. He sees the rise and fall of empires and sects; but the same Old Church always pre-eminent. The records of

the past are with him. He has the sanction of antiquity. Time tells for him a glorious story. He meets with myriads of brethren all along the slumbering ages. The old martyrs and saints are his brethren. He claims companionship with them. Their memories are beloved by him. And Blandina, the poor slave, but noblest of martyrs, was his sister. And old Ignatius, and Polycarp, and Justin, and Irenæus, are also his brethren. And she, the humblest of the humble — the purest of the pure — the stainless Virgin Mother of his Lord, whom all generations call “blessed,” is revered by him as the noblest of creatures. And the old apostles — the noble and the true — the holy and the just — the despised and persecuted — they, too, are his brethren. In short, the saints and martyrs of the olden time, held the same faith, worshipped at the same altar, and used the same form of worship that he does. He venerates and loves their memory, admires their virtues, calls them brethren, and asks their prayers in heaven. He has no accusations to bring against them — no crimes to lay to their charge.

Besides all this, his faith is sustained by a logical power, and a Scriptural proof, that cannot be fairly met and confuted. It is sustained by every plain and luminous principle upon which society and government are founded. His reason, his common sense, the best feelings of his nature, the holiest impulses of his heart, all satisfy him beyond a doubt, that he is in the right.

It is not at all surprising, then, that it is so difficult to convert a Catholic to Protestantism, even when in the vigor of life; and so difficult, that it never has been done, at the hour of death. For there is no known instance where a Catholic changed his faith upon a dying bed; while thousands of Protestants have done so. If a Catholic can live a faithful member of his Church, he

can always die in it. In that awful hour — that honest hour —

“When all the blandishments of life are gone.”

“When tired dissimulation drops her mask,
And real and apparent are the same;”

when eternity, with all its mighty consequences, rolls up its endless proportions before the dying vision — Ah! then, no Catholic asks to change his faith! Oh! give me the last sacraments of the Church! Let me die in her holy communion! Let me be buried in consecrated ground! Let my brethren pray for me!

But there is still another most weighty consideration with him. He examines carefully the doctrines of his Church. From the first to the last article of faith, they are as consistent with each other as truth itself could be. There is no discrepancy — no contradiction. The whole theory, in all its parts, is perfectly consistent with itself. He finds few, if any, to deny this entire consistency of parts with the whole. He knows that every part of a true system must be consistent with each, and with all. No one truth jars with another. There can be no enmity, no discord, in a true system. But he knows it is exceedingly difficult to find this consistency and harmony in a theory of pure error; and still more difficult to find it in a mixed theory of truth and error. And he cannot understand how the alleged additions to the faith could have been made, and so *nicely fitted to the true system, as to be perfectly consistent with it*. He finds it conceded that his Church has the fundamental truths of Christianity, and that her faith is consistent throughout; and he cannot see how this consistency could be found between the alleged added errors and the old truths; and he is forced to conclude, that a theory so consistent in

all its parts and admitted to contain many truths, must be true in every particular.

I will close this work in the words of that distinguished French writer, La Bruyère:

“If my religion be false, it is, I must own, the most artful snare that could possibly be devised. It is impossible to avoid falling into it and being caught. What majesty, what magnificence, in its mysteries! What coherency, what connection, in all its doctrines! What sound reasons! What candor! What innocence of morals! What an invincible and overwhelming body of evidence is given successively, and for three whole centuries, by millions of the most learned and most considerate persons then in the world, and whom the conviction of one and the same truth supported in exile, in fetters, at the approach of death, and under the most cruel torments.”

THE END

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